

Part III

Summary Statement

Bright lights, strong colors, and a cacophony of sounds punctuate Cannons Elementary. It's a place of love, a safe place for children threatened by circumstances. The children provide the music: the sounds of active learning, the silence of concentration, and the laughter of friendship. The teachers provide the steady beat of love, knowledge, and acceptance. Spring in South Carolina is bright--mercifully low humidity and gentle breezes--creating beauty and expectation. Children respond with enthusiasm. Even on testing day, they are excited. But it hides the dark side that over 1/3 of the children at Cannons contend with daily. "I didn't sleep last night, Mrs. Lipscomb." "Why not?" "Lots of noise. Shooting. Police. We hid in the closet all night." "Who's we?" "All of us." The children, 118 of them residing in Lakeview Manor, have borne silent, terrified witness to a drug territory battle between two dealers. The police were called when the shots came, and continued. But they come to school this morning and rush to surround their principal and tell her of the happenings of the night. Stability is important to them. Cannons is their fortress. Even the children who move, continuously in and out--49% (227) in a cyclic pattern to find a place to live, a pattern established because the parents cannot pay the rent--move in, be evicted, move out--are excited to return to Cannons, some such as Debra as many as four times during one school year.

Despite the transient population and a rapid increase in lower socioeconomic rates as measured by free/reduced lunch counts (an increase from 48% in 1995 to 60% in 1998), Cannons' test data reflect steady gain in student achievement, a testament to the use of innovative pedagogy and instruction. The school serves primarily lower middle-class, rural children. 51% of our students live in impoverished, neighborhoods. The school population is diverse, both in skills the children possess when they walk through the doors and the language and customs of their native countries. In spite of these circumstances, by the third grade 20% of the children are identified as academically and/or artistically gifted and receive services in **Atlas** (Action Team for Leading Accelerated Students).

Cannons Elementary School, originally constructed in 1939 for fewer than 100 students, moved into a new facility in 1995. A collaborative group, representing a cross-section of the population, worked on design and features for five years. A theatre for musical and dramatic productions, an art gallery featuring a different artist each month, and a state of the art computer infrastructure that includes a Local Area Network connected to the district Wide Area Network were included.

Located in the center of the new structure is the media center. Natural light from the cathedral ceiling's skylight floods the open space filled with computers and materials for research, preschool toys for parents to check out, and thousands of books that include: books written by students, books written by students in collaboration with senior citizens: books that incorporate every stage, every level, and every interest. The media center is also home to the broadcast studio, the publishing center, and the hardware for the school wide computer network. Each classroom has two or three multimedia computers with direct access to the Internet through a T1 line.

Other needs are met through an English as a Second Language teacher and the Therapeutic Preschool for high-risk three and four-year-olds. Grant writing is encouraged as a way to meet the diverse needs of students. In what was described by the Department of Education as their most competitive grant competition in history, Cannons was awarded a 2.6 million-dollar grant, **The Three Faces of Need**, to transform Cannons into a community learning center. The school now provides after-school programs for first through fifth graders, Saturday activities for children and parents, and summer classes for children that integrate the visual arts, physical education, music, and technology into the basic academic curriculum. Children receive an additional 33% more instruction in reading and mathematics in the after school program. In the first summer program through the grant, 80 third through fifth grade students attended the academic acceleration classes offered through grant funding. Adult education, parenting, and pre-employment skills training are available during the day with babysitting, a meal, and transportation provided. Cannons is proud to house two district-wide, self-contained, emotionally handicapped classes, a learning-disabled class, and a preschool handicapped class. Our entire building is handicapped

accessible. We offer inclusion education to enhance the academic skills and social skills of our learning disabled students. Cannons makes every effort to eliminate barriers to education, be they tangible structures, intangible attitudes, or basic needs such as quality childcare or a hot meal.

Cannons understands that stress is a fundamental cause of failure and violence, and we are taking steps to lower distress in families and in school. Violence prevention workshops are given on the district level, and Cannons will host a county wide two-day workshop on the subject in November of this year. Fifty-eight percent of the highest risk families of preschool children receive home visits through the Therapeutic Preschool, the Preschool Handicapped Program, and Four-Year-Old Kindergarten. Children and parents are able to receive counseling on a regular weekly basis, and the guidance counselor has collaborated with area businesses and churches to ensure every child has a warm coat, shoes that fit, and a present from Santa. Every teacher is mentor to a small group of students in the Family Ties Program that emphasizes respect for others and conflict resolution. Other programs that emphasize social and behavioral skills are the CARE (Care and Respect for Everyone) group, CHAMPS (Champs Have And Model Positive Peer Skills) peer mediation program, Student Council and CHOICE (Choosing Helpful Options in Coping and Education) summer program for children with emotional problems.

The usual dread of a "trip to the office" isn't found among students at Cannons. Good citizenship is rewarded by an "office sucker" and students who master the Accelerated Reader tests are encouraged to bring their test scores to the office to be signed by all present. The principal spends Friday afternoons socializing with the "Principal's Pals," and student work is displayed in classrooms, in the halls, in the principal's office, and in the teacher's lounge. Support staff play an important role in this feeling of family. The head custodian acts as "Papa Bear" to the Therapeutic Preschool, providing a positive male role model to the children. The Parent Teacher Organization provides over 2,000 volunteer hours annually in tutoring children, working in the Publishing Center, answering phones, and providing support service for teachers.

Cannons has won the South Carolina Exemplary Writing Award two consecutive years. Students write in journals, write books in the publishing center, and learn the elements of creative verse as well as expository prose. The multimedia format of *Hyperstudio* helps students make their presentations come to life, and students are encouraged to use approved Internet sites for maximum up to date information for research.

Recent honors and grants awarded Cannons and her teachers include 'Write' Way Publishing Company, Project COMPUTE, Coping Skills for Successful Living, and Care and Respect for Everyone. Three *Learn and Serve America* grants as well as grants from the Greater Arts Partnership have been awarded. Our school has been a School Incentive Award Winner for the past four years. Reading programs, math programs, and technology for impaired students have all been subsidized through grant monies.

We have a motto among our family that states, we care because Children Are Really Everything to us. This is not only a motto, but also a way of life, which is evidenced by all who enter our school. The Cannons' family feels that every child deserves a safe, compassionate place to learn. Each child is accepted as a unique individual with potential, and teachers view themselves as promoters of the child, the school, and the community. One fifth grade student wrote the following in an essay about our new school: "The most important and special part of my school is the people. All the teachers, all the janitors, everyone is loving and kind. I would love this school even if we had class in a doghouse. Even if it were that way, one thing would still stay the same – there would still be love!"

Cannons Elementary School is steeped in history and focused on the future. The focus is real and the results are measured with a test found in our hearts. Cannons can be summarized by one elegant sustained note – the universal "A" of success.

Part IV – Vision/Mission Statement

Vision Statement

Our students will develop their potentials to succeed in the world beyond school.

Belief Statement

We believe that...

Every child has the right to a safe, accepting and caring environment supplied with meaningful materials by which knowledge can be acquired.

Every child's abilities, talents and desires for knowledge should be identified and developed during the never-ending process of education.

Every child should be given the opportunity and assistance needed to develop positive self-concept and establish high expectations while experiencing success in school.

The school and community will form a partnership to provide the opportunity for quality education.

Mission Statement

Cannons Elementary School is committed to provide every child with meaningful experiences to enhance:

**a safe learning environment
a lifelong love for learning
a positive self-concept
responsibility
creativity
high expectations
individuality
good citizenship**

Goals

1. We will provide a safe and orderly school environment.
2. We will use technology to support and improve teaching, learning and school operations.
3. We will design and implement an appropriate learning program for all students.

A. Student Focus and Support

A1. How would you describe your student population? What are your students' needs? How do you assure that the needs of all students are met?

A successful school, like a long-running play, needs daily rehearsals, expert direction, and inspired performance. Rarely, does a play excite and thrill unless each player works in concert with others. Borrowing a line from George Bernard Shaw, Cannons believes that we use a mirror to see our face and the arts to see our soul. We live in a world with as many kinds of learners as there are pieces of knowledge. In order to inspire great learning for all our students, we need to provide a variety of experiences. Cannons is a success, because there are no small parts when it comes to affecting the lives of children. 60% of our children are on free/reduced lunch as compared to a county average of 38%; 34 % of our children are on an Individualized Education Plan or Accommodation Plan. 51% of our children reside in trailer parks, HUD housing, or violence-prone, drug-infested neighborhoods. In the Therapeutic preschool program, 96.6% come from single parent homes; 66% have a parent incarcerated.

The classrooms are filled with children of diverse backgrounds, interests, and experiences. Spartanburg County's rate of birth to women under 20, rate of out-of- wedlock births and divorce rate is higher than the Upstate's or State's percentage. It should come as no surprise that Spartanburg leads in another category; a higher percentage of Spartanburg's youth is committed to correctional facilities. The statistics are harrowing: According to 1990 census figures, 52% of the adult population (18 and older) has less than a 12th grade education. 45.2% of the families in this area have a yearly income of \$22,500 or less. The per capita income in this area is \$9,204, compared to the county's per capita income of \$18,372. Educational attainment, standard of living, and level of employment in District 3 is low. All of these factors have been shown to have a negative impact on student performance, especially as measured on standardized tests. Lack of educational success by parents produces an atmosphere of distrust by parents and students. Frequently, they are afraid to come to the school, expecting that they will experience the humiliation and failure they had experienced previously in a school setting. In a 1998 parent survey, 96% of the parents stated that they felt welcomed when they entered our school, an astounding percentage when one considers the poverty, the parent's own lack of success with education, and the transience of the population.

Although the children's circumstances are difficult, Cannons' vision statement is clear: "Our students will develop their potentials to succeed in the world beyond school." In order to succeed we understand that the school must provide sanctuary, warmth and caring, support and solace, and academic rigor to provide an atmosphere that nurtures each child into a person capable of giving the finest performance. The most important goal is to provide a safe and orderly school environment. The program must eliminate the stress that children experience in violence prone areas. The children attending Cannons need an accepting and open learning environment, an environment that feels emotionally safe for the learner. Our second goal, designing and implementing an appropriate learning program for all students, demands much of a school and the teachers. Every child must experience an appropriate level of challenge. Clear expectations, a focus on results, effective support systems and good modeling make a child feel emotionally safe. If the children experience appropriate challenge, and are encouraged to make sense of powerful ideas, it empowers them. Our third goal, using technology to support and improve teaching, learning and school operations, allows teachers to individualize instruction effectively and efficiently for students.

Project **SEARCH** identifies student needs as early as age three. A **preschool handicapped class, two therapeutic preschool classes, and a four-year-old kindergarten class** address these special needs. This early intervention helps meet their physical, emotional, and academic needs, thus ensuring a brighter future.

Teachers identify **academic needs** of students through **standardized test results, criterion referenced test results, academic grades, and skill checklists**. Successful strategies to address these needs have included **multi-age grouping, grade looping** and traditional classes. Teachers refer students to our School Based Assistance Team (SBAT) for intervention strategies. If strategies are not successful, SBAT then refers students for special services. The Resource class serves learning disabled (LD) and

emotionally disabled (ED) students. **One self-contained learning disabilities class and two emotionally handicapped classes** serve students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Students are **mainstreamed** into the regular education classes to foster social, emotional, and academic growth.

Other programs designed to address student needs include the Reading Recovery program, a reading tutorial teacher, a math tutorial assistant, and a full-time speech clinician. Recognizing that students who come from homes and situations that are so challenging, Cannons Elementary successfully completed a grant to increase academic assistance time. The Twenty First Century Learning Grant, **The Three Faces of Need** enables our students in grades three through five to attend after school programs, monthly Saturday classes, and to participate in summer school activities that enhance academic, cultural, physical and social skills. Additional local funding provides after school programming for Grades 1 and 2. **The extended program provides an additional 1/3 more instructional time for students in reading and mathematics. The need is clear. 73% of students participate in the after school program.**

Along with higher expectations as outlined in the **Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test (PACT) standards**, our school has developed **Academic Assistance Plans** for 75 students (H2). Meeting the goals of these plans involves the cooperation of parents, teacher, principal and child. If parents are unwilling to attend the meeting, a faculty mentor familiar with the student is assigned to help and encourage the child.

ATLAS serves gifted and talented students, identified by state criteria, in grades three through five in the areas of academics, art, and music. 20% of the Cannons' students have been identified as gifted and talented. All second grade students participate in the **"Brain Boosters"** thinking skills program.

Support of children is not limited to the academic. Social, emotional, and physical needs are seen as important factors in molding a successful human being. The **guidance counselor** meets these needs through a variety of activities that emphasize self-esteem and character development. Academic success is directly related to social, emotional, and physical skills. Cooperation is taught and modeled in all areas of school life. Students are instructed to deal with conflicts at school and at home through conflict resolution training. Physical needs of students are met through a physical education curriculum that emphasizes leisure skills, good nutrition and child wellness, all activities that are essential for students who have limited experiences at home. **Certified physical and occupational therapists** assist students who need more intensive physical training. Cannons also offers support for student needs in the areas of personal, medical, and dental care. **The school nurse** screens students annually for vision, hearing, and dental needs. Over 40 different medications and treatments are administered daily by the nurse. 14% of the student body receive regular medication at school. The school has a partnership with **Lenscrafters** to provide services for students with optical needs. Each student with a hearing impairment receives an easy-listener sound field system. **Phonic Ear** is used to enhance listening skills in one classroom. **An ESL teacher** assists those students with a native language other than English.

Communication is the key to meeting the needs of our students. The first and foremost communication involves the relationship between each student and his/her teacher. Through this open communication, student and family needs are met. School staff and faculty contact churches, business and industry, and service clubs to solicit donations of money, goods and services for the children and their families. This is done as an adjunct to other efforts in the community and district. In 1997-98, seventy-eight children benefited from this service. Examples include the following: taking students and family members shopping for clothes and personal items, supplying families with food from a food pantry, providing students with school supplies that are donated by area churches, and furnishing families with clothing from our clothes closet. Maximum learning occurs when the emotional and physical needs of the students are met.

A2. What nonacademic services and programs are available to support students, and how do they relate to the student needs and goals identified?

A play without scenery, costumes, and lighting may be extraneous to the actors and the words, but they are essential to the performance. Nonacademic services and programs are the scenery, costumes, and lighting, the aura that transforms a program from usual or ordinary to essential and extraordinary. As with many programs, the guidance counselor provides counseling for all students on an individual and/or

small-group basis, consultation with parents, teachers, and administrators, and structured classroom guidance activities. However, the population of Cannons is not typical. In the year 1997-98, 38 students participated in the "**Banana Splits**," groups that met to deal with issues children face during divorce and/or separation of parents. The 12 members of **The Care And Respect for Everyone (CARE)** group, who are at-risk students specially selected with attendance, behavior and academic difficulties, focus on conflict resolution, character education, and service projects. These children have never had an opportunity to positively impact and influence people until their participation in service learning projects. Friendship groups are formed to promote bonding, develop better social skills, and encourage positive communication among peers. The guidance counselor conducts the **Study Skills Group** for students with Academic Assistance Plans. **Operation Get Smart**, a S. C. Department of Corrections program, is sponsored yearly for upper-grade students. The full-time school nurse is always ready with a bandage, ice pack, and hug for sick students. Psychologists and social workers are available to further address student needs.

Recognizing the goal of creating productive citizens, we provide a variety of support programs. The **Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum** is used in the classroom. The **Wee Deliver Postal Program** promotes communication through letter-writing skills among the student body and is operated by our upper-grade special education, self-contained classes. **The Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program**, taught by a police officer, is an integral part of fifth-grade curriculum. 100% of fifth graders, including special education students, graduated from the DARE program in 1997-98. All students participate in **Red Ribbon Week** activities. The **Terrific Kids** program recognizes one student per class with improved academic and social behavior monthly and is sponsored by the **Kiwanis Club**. **Principal's Pals** are students recognized monthly for good behavior and perfect attendance. **Open Airways** is a support group that helps 27 of our children who are diagnosed with asthma. The Parent Resource Center in the media center has educational games and toys that parents may check out to use with their children at home.

100% of our students enjoy **Spotlight on the Arts** and **Arts for Me**. These are community/school arts programs featuring local artists and their works. Every month, **Arts for Me** enables the students and stakeholders of our school to meet and receive instruction from a featured artist. Student work is then displayed with the work of the guest artist in the Art Gallery. **Spotlight on the Arts** brings everyone together in the spring to share a love for the arts. Under the direction of a paraprofessional and a grandparent, budding actors may participate in our **Drama Club**. **Creative movement**, a program made possible through a grant funded by **Target 2000**, is an exciting class for students in grades K-3. Fourth and fifth grade students have drama with visiting artists.

Big Brothers and Big Sisters become very special friends to our at-risk students. Eating lunch, reading in the library, and shooting basketball in the gym are a few of the activities that they enjoy. **The Teacher Cadet Program** becomes a reciprocal relationship. The children learn from the cadets, while the cadets learn from our teachers and enjoy a close relationship with the students. Tutoring children, working in the media center, doing clerical work, and assisting in the classrooms are a few of the activities that the service learning students perform for us. Additional support programs for our students involve parent/grandparent volunteers, business partners, and twelve mentors from the **Troopers Mentoring Program**. These volunteers become friends to our students and work with select students to encourage improvement of grades, attendance and self-esteem. All third graders participate in the **Troopers Character Education Curriculum**. A very special program for our younger children is the **Big Buddy/Little Buddy program**. All fifth grade children become reading buddies with our kindergarten/first grade students. Going to the zoo, eating lunch, hunting Easter eggs, and visiting Santa are some of the activities the big buddies and little buddies enjoy.

A3. How does your school determine and address the developmental needs of students as they move from grade to grade?

Cannons accepts students as they are and provides the catalyst to move each child forward. Our programs and services are clearly matched to the developmental needs of our students (A1). Our staff analyzes student data from placement/readiness tests, standardized tests, criterion referenced tests and the

STAR reading inventory to determine individual needs. **Criterion-Referenced Tests**, locally developed by teachers, evolved directly from the state and local curriculum standards. Knowing that a seamless curriculum provides the structure and security for student success, Cannons administers the Criterion-Referenced test in September and in March. The fall results are diagnostic, providing teacher, parents, and student a snapshot of what a child knows and is able to do upon entry into the grade level. The March administration measures the progress the child has made. The report card assesses the skills and standards necessary at a particular grade level. We are also versed in the developmental needs of children based on classroom applications such as **Reading Styles, Multiple Intelligence, Brain Research**, and the **Cunningham Four Block**.

It is essential for Cannons to be a strong, sturdy, and consistent presence in the lives of our students. There is a high rate of mobility (49%) as students move from district to district. Students begin the year, move to another district, and return. This is a revolving cycle of parents not paying rent, being evicted, and moving. Through a strong child-centered vision, Cannons provides stability for students and parents. Curriculum articulation to ensure flow across the grades is a priority. Through the use of the standards-based report card, teachers have a common vocabulary with which they discuss student achievement. We have made a concerted effort to ensure that all teachers are aware of the curriculum standards from kindergarten through twelfth grade. These standards are easily accessed on our district web site, on the **CRT**, on the **PACT** test, and on the report cards. To ensure flow, teachers have met with the grade levels (above and below) to create grade level standards in language arts and math, to develop a comprehensive science curriculum guide, and to design new report cards. **Shared governance** meetings, faculty meetings, and retreats provide opportunities for reflection, discussion and evaluation of curriculum between grade levels. One shared example is the Cunningham Word Wall that has become a part of classrooms from kindergarten to fifth grade. Teachers freely share ideas so that continuity is evident across the grade levels.

Teachers, our guidance counselor, and the principal meet in the spring to discuss proper placement. This team assigns students to the class where he/she will be most productive. Counseling sessions are conducted for students who are retained. **Classes are grouped heterogeneously** looking for a blend of ethnicity, gender, ability levels, and social/emotional growth. Two traditional kindergarten, one traditional first, and two **multi-age** classes are currently provided for kindergarten and first grade students. In 1997-98, we provided a multi-age class to meet the needs of second and third grade students. Currently, two teachers **looped** with their classes. The principal and teachers review placements and make any needed adjustments.

On **Kindergarten and Four-Year-Old Orientation Night**, meeting your new principal, teacher and other members of the Cannons' family is an exciting time for every preschool child. While students enjoy activities with their teacher, parents meet with the principal to learn school policies and receive essential information. Home visits by the guidance counselor, teachers, and our home visitor/parent educator afford insights into specific needs of our students. Through the Family Care Council, parent educators work with parents of infants and toddlers to assist them with basic parenting skills.

During the summer, class rolls are posted on the **school's web site**. Class supplies are posted on each **teacher's web page** so parents can avoid that mad dash to buy school supplies. Clear expectations are a necessity. Students and parents sign a letter indicating that they have read the rules, and teachers reinforce them through posters in their classrooms, letters home, and student/parent handbooks. All students receive a student planner/handbook. This handbook includes a school calendar, policies and procedures. Monthly parent nights provide informal opportunities for parents and school staff to discuss concerns.

Transfer students immediately feel that they are a part of the Cannons' family. Our **Welcoming Committee** introduces the newcomers on the **Cannons Press Club (CPC) News (C1)**, giving them letters from students, treat bags of snacks and school supplies. The **Newcomers Club** gives new students (by grade level) an opportunity to meet with our guidance counselor. During this time, students have the opportunity to meet other new students, to further familiarize themselves with the school setting and routine, and to discuss any concerns about their transition.

Our fifth grade students look forward to their spring visit to the middle school. They enjoy shadowing a sixth grade student to experience the "real life" of a sixth grader. Our fifth grade teachers work closely with middle school teachers regarding placement as they provide information in both academic and social/emotional growth. Orientation meetings for parents are held in the spring. **The Parent to Parent Workshop** is conducted by officers from the Sheriff's Department, the guidance counselor, and trained parent volunteers to teach parenting skills that will help their children say no to drugs. Our students also get a glimpse of life after middle school. **High school mentors** encourage students to do their best. Evidence of successful transition includes comments such as "We can always tell Cannons' students because they are well prepared, especially in the area of language arts, and they are responsible." This adjustment to middle school is also reflected in the high percentage of our students on the **Principal's Honor Roll**. In the first nine weeks grading period, **56% of those on the list** were former students although they represent 30% of the student body.

A4. What cocurricular activities are available for students and how do these activities extend the academic curriculum?

All students participate in at least one educational co-curricular activity. All fourth and fifth grade students write, produce, and direct the daily **Cannons Press Club (CPC) live news** show. Talents are showcased in the **Drama Club**. Drama students have written, produced, and performed original productions (J1). Kindergarten through third grade students participate in **PTO performances**. Weekly, students stay physically fit by joining **the Running Clubs** composed of 185 students--103 male; 82 females. **Intramural Sports** (35 females, 48 males) is a favorite activity for fourth and fifth grade students. There are eight intramural teams with games scheduled twice a week. The **Computer Club**, offered to all students on a six-week rotating basis, enhances keyboarding and academic skills. Our young scientists are challenged in the **Science Club**. Through the **Clemson Extension Service**, a **4H Club** is offered. Fifth grade students are a part of **Student Council**. They learn strategies for a drug-free life in the **Just Say No Club** and by participating in the **DARE** program. **The Youth Advisory Council** meets once a month with the cafeteria manager to sample new foods, select menu choices, and make suggestions for improvements. As **Principal's Helpers**, students assume special responsibilities. Students are active in the community by participating in school-wide service projects such as a canned food drive, providing a Thanksgiving meal for a needy family, and collecting money for the Children's Advocacy Center. **Spotlight on the Arts (A2)** enables the students and community to enjoy visual, musical, and theatrical productions. **Arts for Me (A2)** brings local artists into the school to provide instruction in their particular medium and to display their works of art. We have 100% participation in the Arts for Me program.

A5. How does your school address the accessibility of its facilities to students and others with disabilities?

Our building meets the requirements of the American Disabilities Act of 1990. The school is on one level and is contained in one building. Many features make our school accessible including extra-wide classroom doors, ramps, hand railings, Braille signage, strobe lighting alarms for the hearing impaired, handicapped parking, modified desks, computer accessories, and special playground equipment. Grant funds were used to purchase a laptop computer and language arts software to use with students who experience weak fine-motor control. The speech clinician, a hearing handicapped teacher, an occupational therapist, and a physical therapist work with our disabled students. These specialists also meet with teachers and parents to provide specific therapeutic activities for students. To provide the least restrictive environment, all special needs students participate in physical education, music, and art with their peers. Students are also mainstreamed in the regular classroom for academic instruction. Peer tutoring is used to build a sense of belonging and enhance academic skills. Our Learning Disabled Class is responsible for the **Wee Deliver Program**. (A2) Our Emotionally Disabled Class has published "**The Furry News**" (C4b). Our disabled students in grade five have representatives on Student Council.

B. School Organization and Culture

B1. How does the culture of your school support the learning of all its members and foster a caring community?

Cannons' rewards good behavior. Positive reinforcement is the norm. With a student population who has already received enough slaps and daily unpleasantness, the faculty and staff provide constant reinforcement of desirable behavior. Students are sent to the office with 100's in order to select a prize from the principal's treasure chest; student artwork and prose line the walls of the building. Each teacher has a behavior management plan. Office sucker awards, bicycle awards, Reader Hall of Fame, Principal's Honor Roll, Ruritan Award winners for academics, and other activities reinforce academic and management skills.

Students have the opportunity to participate in activities designed to promote independence. Utilizing a technology infrastructure that provides classroom Internet access, teachers develop a framework of guided tours and WebQuests, inquiry-based, simulation activities. Teachers guide the inquiry so that the child is focused on the instructional task. Scavenger hunts and guided tours are ways to direct computer inquiry. To look for ideas, teachers utilize the web resources on the District 3 site.

Critical thinking skills are reinforced in all activities. Every program is an academic program. First and second grade students in Creative Movement class are asked to be analytical as the teacher asks students what a particular movement is like in the "real world," or why a particular costume is appropriate. Integrative approaches to learning are stressed as teachers use STC or FOSS science kits, a hands-on, inquiry-based curriculum model, that stimulates a students understanding of concepts as it integrates language arts and math into the lessons. Even through cocurricular activities, critical thinking skills, problem solving and collaborative reflection are encouraged. As **Youth Advisory Council** members, the students express their ideas to the cafeteria staff on planning meals and ways to improve the cafeteria program, reinforcing their understanding of nutrition and health issues. **Student Council** members are busy making decisions about service learning projects. "I can operate the camera", "Do you feel comfortable as the anchor?" are a few of the statements you would hear as our **CPC (Cannons Press Club) news crew** (C1) work together to choose the director, editor, anchors, and producers.

Shared Governance is a well-known term to the faculty and staff. Our principal believes that since children always come first, the teachers who work directly with the children should be the primary decision- makers. Teachers and staff make decisions regarding issues such as discipline, lunch, curriculum, technology, scheduling, fine arts, and budgets. **Monthly grade level meetings** are held with the principal. **Curriculum alignment, program evaluation, test score analysis** and sharing of effective approaches are just a few of the items that can be found on the monthly agenda. **Teachers and cafeteria workers** come together on the **Cafeteria Improvement Committee** to discuss issues.

Our **School Improvement Council** consisting of parents, teachers, and community members addresses data gathering through surveys, strategic planning, and student rewards. Given the responsibility for driving the ACT 135 plan, the academic plan is shaped by this group. Three committees assist the school: safe schools, technology, and curriculum. A new parent, a teacher at another school, exclaimed, "Your SIC did all of this! I served on our school committee last year and we made no decisions that affected children as this SIC has done."

B2. What opportunities do students have to build sustained and caring relationships with teachers and other adults? How does your school promote a healthy peer climate among the students?

A former student presently in college wrote to a teacher, "I would like to thank you for helping me revise my essay. It is refreshing to know that after nine years, you still care about my education." The loving and caring attitudes observed among the faculty and staff provide opportunities for students to develop special relationships with these adults. Smiles, pats on the back, and hugs are naturally in abundance each day. Often faculty and staff members are seen engaged in informal conversations to keep abreast of students' triumphs and challenges.

The **Wee Deliver** program strengthens the bond among the Cannons' family as they write letters to each other. Students, faculty, and staff are also involved in "**Family Ties**", a school-wide program which assigns students of all grades to a multi-age group led by a caring "parent" from the faculty and staff.

Every Friday on our **CPC News show** (C1), you may hear questions such as "How do you suppose a lion could be kind to a mouse, or a mouse to a lion?" Our principal encourages our children to listen for the answer as she reads a story on kindness. Each month various character traits such as kindness, honesty, and responsibility are stressed. While walking through the halls, you will see students demonstrate their interpretation of the highlighted traits through bulletin board displays.

Sustained, caring relationships are evident as teachers attend skating nights, sports events, plays, church programs, and dance recitals in which their students participate. Our principal crowns Little League football Homecoming Queens. "Miss" Edna and Mr. Fernanders, our custodians, offer more than just clean facilities. Miss Edna shared with one fifth grade class about a trip to her grandmother's house. Her experience was reported in the student publication, "**Take Time in Life.**" Mr. Fernanders is often seen with a four-year-old "helper" as they dust the media center. Support during times of grief has also strengthened the "family" bonds, as teachers attend funeral services for family members of their students and send cheer packages such as flowers, meals, and/or monetary donations. When a kindergarten student's mother died, she requested that her teacher escort her to the funeral services.

There are programs that emphasize positive behavior and a healthy peer climate among the students. **Big Buddies/Little Buddies** (A2), **CARE** (A2), **Peacemakers Peer Mediation Club** (C5b), **Office Sucker Rewards**, **Biking for Behavior** and **Gumballs for Behavior** (B4) instill in our students the desire to work together cooperatively. Because of our need for positive minority role models, we instituted the **Troopers Mentoring Program**, sponsored by the United Way and the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission. Business executives interact weekly with targeted, at-risk third grade students. Through service learning grants, our teachers have implemented character education programs that further facilitate healthy peer interactions.

When it was noted that a group of new fourth grade students were experiencing difficulties adjusting to a different school, they attended a counseling group session formed just for them. After a few sessions, the students had made new friends and felt more a part of their peer group. Another opportunity for adjustment was offered when a group of second grade girls was referred to the guidance counselor. They had been experiencing difficulties with friendship, anger, and behavior-management skills. Small group counseling sessions helped them focus on positive peer relationships.

Further evidence of a positive peer climate is reflected in the following quote from a parent. "You are the only hug, only kind word, smile, and encourager that some of the children who pass through here will ever have."

B3. How are teachers hired in your school? How are teacher assignments made?

Teacher turnover is extremely low. In the past five years, changes in staff include the following: one part-time teacher resigned due to relocation, addition of special education staff and the addition of two teachers to lower teacher-pupil ratio. Teacher recruitment takes place through the district office and through the Spartanburg School District 3 web page, accessible at www.spa3.k12.sc.us. We work with Converse College and the University of South Carolina to place student teachers and practicum students.

The principal and a team of teachers participate in interviewing potential candidates. Assignments are based on teacher expertise, class size, and student needs. Teachers may **loop** to the next grade with students or teach **multi-age classes**, making every effort to do what is best for our students. The principal, teachers, and guidance counselor meet to discuss student placement and teacher assignment. Our special education teachers are an excellent example of teachers teaming their talents and abilities to best meet the needs of students. These teachers team-teach, individualize instruction, and work with classroom teachers to include special education students in the regular classroom. While most teachers clamor for classes that are homogeneous or "easy to teach," one of Cannons' teachers looped with a class that was primarily composed of students on Individual Education Plans or Accommodation Plans. Having inculcated a myriad of reading instructional strategies successfully for these students, the teacher felt that she was in a position to make the greatest impact on the students the following year. Building trust, empowering students to be daring with their learning, the teacher incorporated learning styles, Phonic Ear, and other strategies to jump-start the children's learning. Children felt good about their learning because the teacher provided them with the necessary security and safety.

B4. What is your school's plan for school safety, discipline, and drug prevention? What was your record for the past five years?

"I want to stay here with you. I don't want to go home after school." Similar words are often heard from students. Safety is a priority. **The Safe Schools Plan** is updated annually by the **School Improvement Council** and the **Safe Schools Committee**. All students are entitled to a safe school environment. Faculty and staff members wear gold identification badges. Visitors and parents sign in at the office to secure visitor identification badges. Our **Crisis Management Plan** is in place with emergency exit maps posted in all rooms. Drills are conducted for fire, tornado, and earthquake awareness. Our school resource officer is available for assistance. An in-house telephone system with an emergency signal has been installed in each classroom. A few of the special safety emphases that are observed are **Fire Safety Week, Bus Safety Week, Red Ribbon Week, Bicycle Safety programs, and the Stranger-Danger program**. Shortly after one Stranger-Danger program, six children approached by a man in a white van rejected a stranger's offer of rides and candy. The children's actions, as well as their ability to give an accurate description of the perpetrator and his actions, impressed the police. A national safety consultant recently inspected our school. We were commended for excellent safety procedures such as wearing identification badges, keeping doors locked, being able to lock outside and inside parameters, and loading and unloading car and bus riders safely. On field trips, students are required to wear school T-shirts and identification wristbands.

Emphasis is placed on making students responsible for their actions. Families are provided with the behavior policy. These are filed in permanent records and/or portfolios. All teachers and staff have been trained in crisis intervention techniques. An intensive ten-week group class for families, **Back in Control**, teaches families how to control children's misbehavior. Follow-up workshops ensure success.

Students strive for the **Biking-For-Behavior** reward. Our PTO provides a bicycle that is awarded at the end of the school year for a deserving primary student and elementary student. At the end of each month, well-behaved students get their names placed in a box for this special drawing. Students also work hard to earn "gumballs" in special area classes. Incentives are awarded at various levels.

Cannons successfully meets the requirements for the **Drug-Free Schools and Community Act**. **The South Carolina Army National Guard** entertains students with a puppet show while teaching drug prevention. Third graders are assigned individual mentors through the **Troopers Mentoring Program**. Teachers and students annually observe **Wellness Week**. The physical education teacher and his committee plan special exercise activities for students, faculty, and staff. Other drug prevention programs include **DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), Smoking Education Week, and Red Ribbon Week**. Our school was fortunate to have hosted John Lasne, author of *The Red Ribbon*. We are proud that no incidents related to drugs, alcohol, or weapons have occurred.

C. Challenging Standards and Curriculum

C1. How does your curriculum serve the broad goals for student learning and development that the public generally expects education to achieve: personal and intellectual growth, citizenship, and preparation for work? What relative emphasis do you place on these goals in your curriculum?

The constructivist approach toward learning-- students working in groups with a variety of information and experience to construct their own understandings--lends itself to simulations and activities that are standards-based. With the new test, PACT, emphasis on higher order thinking skills linked with a standards-based curriculum is essential. "Kids learn by doing, by presenting, by displaying, by engaging," says William Fiske. He adds, "Learning happens best when the youngsters are doing the heavy lifting." The creation of rigorous academic standards assures that what is most important is taught. Appropriately designed academic standards define what all students should know and be able to do, focuses the organization and delivery of classroom instruction, and assists parents to help their children. We have learned that the more students are involved in targeted and directed instruction based on their particular needs, the more likely they are to achieve at higher levels. To be successful, students must apply what they have learned. They require the knowledge and strength of character to know what is best for them and to resist those temptations that could distract them for achieving academic and personal

success. Students who do not have a significant role model in their lives or parents who can help them with their schoolwork are at a competitive disadvantage. In a letter, a high school student reflects, "Ever since second grade, I have looked up to you and dreamed of becoming a teacher like you. Not only did you teach the daily lessons, but you also taught values in life such as respect and kindness. These values have led me through life and made me who I am. Not only did you teach values, but also you encouraged me. You changed my life and I hope I can be a great teacher like you. I want to be able to say I made a difference just like you."

The Cannons after-school program targets each student's academic weakness through the use of academic standards and diagnostic assessments that reflect those standards. Over 50% of our students participate in this program. Since many of our students enter school behind their peers, they must learn at a faster rate. Complementing this initiative is community service learning projects. Students participate in food drives, contribute to our five senses garden, assist in the purchase of drama and physical education equipment, and donate time and money to help other students with great needs.

In our quest to develop well-rounded citizens, we also infuse a school-wide character development program that focuses on topics such as sharing and caring, responsibility, trustworthiness, and conflict resolution. The **Care And Respect for Everyone (CARE) Club** members study lessons on how to interact with others and prepare activities for field trips to day cares, nursing homes, hospitals, and the Children's Advocacy Center. The **District 3 School-to-Work Program** is geared to all grade levels and introduces students to a wide variety of careers. Listening through the fireman's head gear, using a stethoscope to hear a heartbeat, and learning how to care for a goat farm were only a few of the experiences provided for the students. **The Family Care Council, the United Way, the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission, and the Spartanburg County Sheriff's Department** sponsor programs for our students. The **Very Important Person (VIP) Character Education Program, The Second Step Violence Prevention Program, the Troopers Mentoring Program and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) Program** encourage students to become responsible citizens and help them learn how to make wise choices.

Citizenship and responsibility are stressed with awards for classes with the best attendance and cleanest rooms. The students exercise their democratic rights as they vote on school-wide issues such as naming the school mascot (Champ), naming a class newspaper (*The Furry News*), voting for the South Carolina Book Award, and selecting a favorite performer during Music Appreciation Week. Our CPC News staff presents morning announcements from our live television studio each day and is responsible for writing scripts, operating equipment, and serving as news anchors. Students learn to use a word processor, a database, retrieve information from the Internet, and present information in a multimedia format.

C2. How is your school organized to provide for differing student academic needs within the school's goals, priorities, and curriculum?

Classes are grouped heterogeneously so those barriers to learning are removed. Each student is evaluated for an **Academic Plan**. If a child is performing below grade level, an assistance team that includes the child's parent meets to **address the academic weaknesses**. Recognizing that students who perform below grade level need extensive support, the **after-school program** is used. Students work with tutors and teachers on prescribed activities that are aligned with the student's current classroom work. These lessons reinforce and extend current instructional work. Skill lessons in reading and mathematics, a prescriptive Jostens' software program, and problem-solving lessons address the academic weaknesses. Teachers meet at the end of each school year to place students for the upcoming year. Students who continue to perform below grade level receive instruction in **the summer program**. Utilizing this innovative approach, **students receive the equivalent of an additional eleven weeks of instruction**. The teacher focuses on critical pre-requisite skills. Diversities are taken into consideration to ensure a smooth transition to the next placement for students and teachers. Matt, a self-contained ED student, best illustrates the openness and warmth of the Cannons' program. After a year of special attention, careful monitoring, and measured introduction into mainstream classes, Matt is fully mainstreamed this year. At the end of the 1997-1998 school year, four accelerated students were placed in

a higher grade for the upcoming year (1998-1999). Two of these students were in a kindergarten/first grade multi-age class setting for their first year of public school, where they mastered the required kindergarten *and* first grade curriculum standards. A kindergarten student was accelerated to second grade. A second grader in a multi-age second grade class was also accelerated to the fourth grade. Our greatest success, however, has been in keeping underachieving students on grade level, through careful assessment and correction of academic weaknesses. **Small class size is a priority.**

C3. How do you ensure that diverse learners (for example, students with disabilities, gifted and talented students, students with limited English proficiency, migrant students, and students placed at-risk) all have the opportunity to learn challenging content and achieve at high levels?

Cannons Elementary is the home of **two therapeutic childcare classes, one preschool multi-handicapped class, one four-year-old kindergarten class, two emotionally disabled (ED) self-contained classes, and one learning disabled (LD) self-contained class.** Student goals, progress, and achievement are outlined in an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). **A resource teacher** serves students who have been referred by teachers and are found to be educable mentally disabled, learning disabled, and/or emotionally disabled, but do not require a self-contained model. Both academic and social needs are addressed. All special education students participate in regular classes for art, music, physical education, and field trips. Inclusion is used for language arts, science, social studies, and health when appropriate, with necessary supplies, equipment, and monitors. Since the curriculum standards move along a continuum, children of varying abilities are challenged appropriately. While one child is focusing on essential questions generated by a problem-solving activity, another child is challenged by the facts of the problem. **A Reading Recovery** teacher intercepts first grade students experiencing reading difficulties and provides training to all teachers in strategies for helping students who need extra assistance. **All second grade students** participate in **Brain Boosters**, a challenging, hands-on, inquiry-based class designed to enrich the curriculum. An **ESL teacher** provides focused instruction for students with limited English proficiency. ESL students are mainstreamed and services compliment and supplement the classroom instruction. Reading and math tutorial programs serve students in grades one through five. Qualifying students in grades three through five participate in the gifted and talented program, **ATLAS**. The **ATLAS** program provides enrichment activities and opportunities for students to expand their worldview through attendance at concerts, dramas, and extended field trips.

C4. Successful schools offer all students opportunities to be engaged with significant content. How does your school ensure that students achieve at high levels in the core subject?

a. English (Language Arts) Curriculum standards are aligned with our standards. Writing is an integral part of the curriculum standards. We put into action the thought that we "read to write and write to read." The warmth felt by a student as s/he opens the class mailbox and retrieves mail from a friend, parent, teacher, or staff member, is easy to observe. Each Tuesday and Friday students and teachers communicate with each other using **Wee Deliver**, the school postal service. Student work covers walls, bulletin boards, and doors. Honored by the State Department of Education for a second consecutive year as an **Exemplary Writing School**, Cannons' journey of success begins with our youngest students whose teachers immerse them into a wealth of writing and reading experiences. Using letter and word walls, labeling objects and pictures in the classroom, and encouraging the use of environmental print, inventive spelling, and picture journals, children create their own works of great literature in the **Write Way Publishing Center**. **Cunningham's** Four Blocks instruction involves teaching reading skills through the basal reader. Included in reading instruction are *Daily Oral Language*, Cunningham's *Phonics Month by Month*, **Anne H. Adams' Success in Reading and Writing**, and **Carbo's reading styles**. Older students participate in reading unit novels such as *How to Eat Fried Worms* and *Sign of the Beaver* to strengthen their love for reading. Fifth graders enjoy reading and writing to their kindergarten and first grade buddies. Fourth graders share alphabet books they have made with four-year-olds. Technology has allowed children to create stories with *Storybook Weaver*. Older students create written reports using *Hyperstudio* or *PowerPoint*. The fifth graders' *PowerPoint* presentation to our principal is included on the district web page.

The reading assessment, **STAR**, quickly identifies the reading level of each student. We are then able to direct students to the appropriate **Accelerated Reader** books which give them practice that enhances reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and writing skills.

Each Friday morning, a student's name is chosen to take "**Champ**", our teddy bear mascot, home for the weekend. During that time, the student writes in Champ's travel journal about their exciting adventures. Writing is woven into all areas of the curriculum. The art teacher uses student writing in creating puppet shows dealing with character development and conflict resolution. Writing to pen pals of a neighboring school offers the students an exciting way to communicate what they learn and enjoy in creative movement class.

The community of learners enjoys its reading and writing opportunities. Select student writings are compiled into anthologies of children's writings and are offered to Cannons' stakeholders. Examples of these anthologies are *Take Time in Life*, *Tell Me Grand*, and *Doors of the Past*. A student's love of writing is apparent when she wrote; "I wrote this essay because it was fun." One teacher co-authored a book about reading and writing in pre-kindergarten, and it is presently being piloted in the four-year-old kindergarten class. Our speech clinician, recently wrote and performed a song about children entitled, "Take a Little Time". The love for writing is contagious.

b. Mathematics The aroma of fresh-baked cookies, brownies, and cakes filling the halls of Cannons Elementary reassures everyone that it is Friday, and one class is using math skills for measuring, estimating, and counting while getting ready for their weekly bake sale. Another class publishes their school newspaper, "**The Furry News**", as a way to learn to manage money. Active and relevant math instruction is woven into all areas of the curriculum. **Curriculum standards** are organized into six content strands: number and numeration systems; numerical and algebraic concepts and operations; patterns, relationships and functions; geometry and spatial sense; measurement; and probability and statistics. The knowledge and skills described in the standards are integrated across the entire curriculum so students will be able to apply what they learn to real life situations. Students use four processes in math: problem solving, communicating, reasoning, and connections. In order to assist teachers to make these connections, the school has membership in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).

Math experiences are also written about in student math and/or writing journals. Teachers use a variety of materials and strategies to encourage active, hands-on learning. *Great Exploration in Math and Science (GEMS)*, *Activities Integrating Math and Science (AIMS)*, *Opening Eyes to Mathematics*, *Box-It or Bag-It Math*, and *Mathematics Their Way* encourage students to utilize their thinking and process skills while working cooperatively to solve problems. Fifth graders adopt "sugar babies" (five-pound bags of sugar dressed and treated as babies), in order to learn responsibilities such as shopping, making a budget, and balancing a checkbook. *Box-It or Bag-It Math* strategies include reading charts, using popular literature (for example, *M & M Counting Book*), and introducing the concepts of counting, sorting and classifying. In order for our students to be ready for each grade level, our report cards are categorized by skills that correlate to our curriculum standards. Students experiencing difficulty in math attend the after school program.

c. Science We consider science--a big adventure. Students go on various field trip adventures, one being a trip to the pumpkin patch. The students learn about plants and living things and even get to pick a special pumpkin of their very own. Fourth graders enjoy visiting Discovery Place in Charlotte. Second and third graders visit Roper Mountain Science Center in Greenville. **ATLAS** students visit Spartanburg Regional Medical Center where they learn about health care, and Barrier Island Environmental Camp where they have first-hand experiences studying marine biology.

In Cannons' courtyard, the students can see busy bees, beautiful butterflies, tiny goldfish, turtles, tadpoles and frogs. A variety of beautiful flowering plants and herbs add to this "five-senses" garden. Second grade students become gardeners as they plant seeds and attend their growth. First graders "blast-off" into space from their own space station. Each fall our fourth graders make life-size models of the human body to help them learn about the body systems and internal organs. Students enjoyed observing

hermit crabs and rats. For months students observed the daily behavior of these animals and recorded information in their science journals.

The science curriculum is changing to become evermore challenging. Our district has purchased hands-on materials from the National Science Resource Center and STC science kits that provide a hands-on, inquiry-based instructional foundation for students. These materials, along with the **Curriculum Standards**, form the foundation for science in our school. Stressing the science process skills of observing, classifying, measuring, inferring, predicting, and communicating, teachers use modern technology and the Internet to foster student inquiry. Every spring students prepare individual science projects and participate in the Science Fair. Teachers understand that students learn best by doing. Working on a class science project gives the students the confidence they need to complete a project of their own. Our media specialist keeps a great supply of books and resources to help stimulate and give our students ideas for projects. Each year “scientists” from Cannons are invited to submit their projects in the regional science fair held at USCS.

d. Social Studies What is the largest river in South America? What country is known for Aborigines, kangaroos, and koalas? Ask any fourth or fifth grade student these questions and they will probably know the answers. Instruction in social studies is standards-based. The draft document stresses the importance of students being able to place themselves within the world framework. As with all elementary schools who serve a lower socioeconomic student body, instruction in reading and writing takes precedence. However, through integrated strategies, reading materials and writing, topics focus on historical or geographic information. Teachers use thematic units that include social studies components and special area teachers contribute by including social studies concepts in lessons and activities. The Cannons' students take geography and social studies very seriously. Each spring students compete to represent our school in the **district geography bowl**. Everyone feels the pride when our students bring home the trophy. As part of their early morning work, students answer several geography questions. They race for maps, globes, atlases, computers, and any other resources that will help them complete their work. Cannons is blessed with a wealth of first-hand information about the area from community members who make classroom visits each year. Our grand citizens go into the classrooms to share experiences from their early school days and describe education long before the days of cars, cafeterias, and computers. Our school-wide theme, **"Nothing Could be Finer Than to Learn in Carolina"**, teaches students to take pride in our state. Cannons' students are learning about our people, government, and industries. We visit landmarks such as **Walnut Grove Plantation, Cowpens National Battlefield, our state capitol, the state museum, and the Museum of York County**. A student-produced social studies project is the **Parade of States**, a collection of shoebox dioramas that highlight each state. Fifth grade students have learned about the **German** culture, and about life in **Japan** from our two **Japanese** interns.

e. The Arts The arts curriculum is integrated into the school's core curriculum. In art class, examples of successful projects include shadow puppet characters and group scripts written and produced into plays. This involves higher order thinking skills, writing, speaking, cooperating with peers and using imagination. The students evaluate their productions as they watch their classmates' presentations and their group's show on video. During **Black History Month**, the GT music students research musicians, write and report their findings, and play the music of a Black artist each morning on our in-house news program. The student body votes for their favorite musician. The results are displayed in graph form. The creative movement teacher has students create dances where they stack boxes to build symmetrical buildings. These dances are performed on stage and videotaped for a later performance on architecture. Classroom projects extend into the arts curriculum. Art and music students work with fractions while they are studying them in the classroom.

f. Foreign Languages (Optional) All fifth graders participate in the **German** program two days each week. The program is successful with the students because of the incorporation of engaging and challenging activities. The students often elect to continue studying the language at the middle school. The interest generated for German at the elementary level has established a confidence that the students carry with them to middle and high school. **Konichiwa** is the **Japanese** greeting known to all our students. Cannons has been host to a **Japanese intern** who introduces culture, language, and origami to

the students. Each year she has an after school club, teaches Japanese to students in grades 2-4, and maintains a Japanese Corner in the media center. Students enjoy the traditional tea ceremony, learning quickly that "green" tea is not their favorite.

C5. What other content areas play essential roles in your school-wide curriculum goals?

Two areas of importance to the Cannons' students are technology and **The Three Faces of Need Project**.

a. Technology We realize the importance of technology information access, particularly with students who are least likely to own technology at home. We make it available so that there will not be two classes of students --those who are educated and those who are lost in an information society. The environment places a premium on flexibility, innovation, self-direction and collaborative problem solving. The SCANS report calls for "workers who work on teams, teach others, serve customers, lead, negotiate and work well with people from diverse backgrounds." The workplace of the future, the SCANS report states that students need to "acquire, organize, interpret, and evaluate information and use computers to process it." Cannons' students utilize technology, including Hyperstudio, PowerPoint, keypals, and CPC news. Learning to use and apply technology to answer questions and solve problems is no longer a frill. It is a necessity. Retrieving, selecting, and evaluating information is a goal for our students. Using higher order thinking skills to format and present the information is better achieved by using all aspects of technology. For that reason, the students can thrive in our technology rich environment. Students work in a thirty-station computer lab to use the Internet or Jostens' **Tomorrow's Promise software**, or in the classroom where there are at least two internet- connected, multimedia computers. The media center houses ten computers for student use, while every special area teacher also has a computer and printer. Students use networked programs as well as CD ROM programs. With grant monies, readiness and reading software has been purchased. Often, students and teachers are learners together as they use new technology. Through this process, students also see that learning is a life-long experience. Technology is the key for opening the world to our rural community.

b. The Three Faces of Need Project: The project puts it all together. Cannons took what we knew about education, social service, and community development and integrated it into a coherent plan for providing students and their families with the support they need to be successful. We focused on three objectives: 1) The need to operate with a clear focus and high expectations for all of our students; 2) The need to provide students who are further behind with more directed instructional time; 3) The need to require a mix of academic and supportive services to increase chances of success. Healthy, happy children become confident learners and successful, productive adults. There are several key elements: an after-school academic program (C1, C2), an after-school life skills program, a monthly Saturday program for students and parents, and a summer program for students and parents. The life skills program focuses on four critical areas: Appreciating the relevance of cultural arts, the importance of nutrition, drug avoidance and health to academic, social and economic success, career choice preparation, and personal and behavioral traits necessary for success. **We are committed to a safe environment, good nutrition and health services, exercise, staff and student wellness, family and community involvement, character development and social and emotional health.** Our specific programs help students learn key personal, social and academic skills; involve students in addressing real life issues; and give students the skills to resist the use of alcohol and drugs and resolve conflicts without violence. The guidance counselor provides individual, small group, and classroom guidance sessions on **self-esteem, peer relations, conflict resolution, decision-making, careers, and family crises**. Students become self-motivated to form clubs for encouraging positive behavior. **Character education** is taught with a school-wide emphasis on monthly themes. Lessons are conducted in each classroom integrating the character trait into the daily curriculum. School Based Assistance Team, intergenerational activities, parent involvement, home visitation, clothes/food closet, intramural sports, and motivational speakers reinforce the concepts. **Hoechst Celanese, Inc.; Progress Lighting, Inc.; and Advantica, Inc.,** are wonderful business partners who provide mentors, tutors, and community programs on conflict resolution. We have established strong partnerships with community agencies. The **Family Care Council** provides the **Second Step Violence Prevention** curriculum, **Character Education** curriculum, and **Back-In-Control program**, which teach in-service parenting classes. Special activities such as the **Care And Respect for Everyone (CARE)**

group, **Be Cool** conflict management program, **Just-Say-No Club**, **Champs Have And Model Positive Peer Skills (CHAMPS)** peer mediation program, and **Choosing Helpful Options In Coping and Education (CHOICE)** summer program for children with emotional problems, provide further assistance. Intermediate classes are paired with kindergarten/first grade (K/1) classes in our **Big Buddies Program**. Our school has received a **South Carolina Healthy School Award** for emphasis on social and emotional health.

C6. What requirements must be satisfied before a student is promoted to the next grade or level of schooling?

Students are promoted based on data. Data considered are: standardized test scores, classroom performance, diagnostic testing, and teacher judgement. At the end of the first and third nine-week grading period, teachers schedule parent conferences. At the first conference, parents receive a copy of grade-level standards. Teachers inform parents of the instructional program and enlist their support. Parents and teachers work to better prepare children. Students who experience learning difficulties are given additional support during the school day, and in the **After School Program (C1)**. We believe that the earlier students with academic deficiencies are identified, the better our chances are of helping them fulfill their potential. First grade students who experience difficulties with reading are referred to the **Reading Recovery** teacher. A full-time **math assistant** works with students individually or in small groups, reinforcing academic skills. Teachers provide academic remediation and support through the Jostens' Tomorrow's Promise curriculum. Classroom teachers coordinate instruction with the **After School** teachers. Teachers contact parents whenever academic problems become evident. Parents come in for additional conferences and work with the teacher on a plan to help the children. Teachers conduct a midterm conference with the parents of children who may be considered for retention. At this meeting the parents sign a form stating that they are aware of the problems and a possibility of retention. Every effort is made to help the students achieve their potential. Students are further assisted by an Academic Assistance Plan. Parents and teachers meet to discuss special remedial plans. Students who master minimum skills are accelerated in the classroom by enrichment activities and/or grouping. **The Accelerated Reader Program** challenges students to reach their full potential in reading. **ATLAS (A1)** challenges students, who meet specific criteria, to synthesize, analyze, and evaluate and enrich curriculum models.

C7. What is the process for continuous curriculum renewal at your school? What questions about curriculum is your school currently addressing?

Through strategic planning, we continuously reassess curriculum needs. Every 5 years, we undertake a major assessment with stakeholders in the community of our mission, our learner standards and program areas; this is updated yearly. Curriculum standards have been developed for each grade level and revised yearly to reflect national or state standards. Through the use of these standards, teachers have a common vocabulary to use in discussing student performance. After analyzing demographic data (A1) and student achievement data (H3), Cannons recognized that major restructuring and systemic reform must take place if all students were to reach their potential. From that recognition evolved the first after school program four years ago. Continuing to evaluate the success of the program, the academic connections were strengthened through **The Three Faces of Need Program (C5)**. Typical of the continuous improvement used for all programs, a focus group, consisting of parents and teachers, assisted with the development of a needs assessment survey that identified the specific problems that face each family and the appropriate services that could address the problems. Report cards reflect the standards for each grade. Social studies standards are currently under review. A comprehensive, sequential list of standards written for grades kindergarten through fifth grade is provided to parents. Cannons' faculty has undertaken participation in graduate courses that stress standards development and curriculum alignment. Our faculty is currently in the process of examining and enhancing the reading curriculum at our school. Through a partnership with Union Camp and the Piedmont Math and Science Hub, our teachers have been trained to implement a **hands-on, inquiry-based science kit based program**. Current revision of curriculum in our school focuses upon the recently passed **Accountability Act**. Our goal is to identify gaps between our resources and the standards and prepare students for **PACT**.

D. Active Teaching and Learning

D1. How are teaching practices and learning experiences in your school consistent with current knowledge about successful teaching and learning?

When the primary age children are excitedly riding through the apple orchard in York, South Carolina, they do not even realize that their science class is in progress. Students have been studying the five senses in the classroom, and the field trip emphasizes another way we see, smell, touch, hear, and taste. Student learning has become defined not only as “What a student KNOWS,” but also as, “What a student is ABLE TO DO.” As a result, it is more true today than ever before that a good teacher cannot depend upon the textbook as the only source of information. In some subject areas and in some classrooms, textbooks are being eliminated in favor of science kits or in favor of communication modules. **We team technology with a child who is equipped with reading, writing, and mathematics skills so that learning can explode.** Thematic teaching techniques are used so that learning is not fragmented. During a typical unit, we explore literature and use math, science, and writing as a tool to increase student learning. Students begin practicing the principles of cooperative learning as early as first grade. Learning to accept the differences of others and knowing how to be sensitive to others’ needs is carried over into the classroom, whether the students are completing a science experiment, making a book in the publishing center, or working as a team in physical education. Multi-age classes were formed to challenge students who were developmentally advanced and to give reinforcement and more time to delayed students. The teacher has the advantage each year of knowing exactly where each child is academically, and can begin instruction at that level. Teachers have chosen looping for the same reason. Several teachers use Carbo’s reading techniques to reach students who have experienced problems with conventional methods. **Math Their Way** has been essential to teaching primary math. Manipulatives, simulations, relevant activities, and inquiry-based centers stimulate students to explore patterning numbers, weather, money, and time all during the morning calendar routine. Concepts learned are carried over to projects or activities at centers. Central to our belief is that writing is essential to constructing understanding.

D2. In what ways do your teaching practices support student-initiated learning?

Children construct their learning. Through kit-based, hands-on, and inquiry-based science instruction, students work in groups to construct and discover concepts. Whether it is working with the floating and sinking kit or with magnets, the students and teachers have long adhered to the old adage that “two heads are better than one.” We know that three or four heads are even more productive. Which boat shape holds the most pennies? Students discover the answer to this question as they complete a class science project. Each class completes a group science project so that the students learn the steps of the scientific process.

Teachers know that students learn better by using a variety of instructional methods, instructing the whole class, small groups, and individuals, as well as using learning centers. Through the sugar baby simulation, a math teacher has students make babies out of five pound bags of sugar, measure and weigh them, keep a journal about the sugar baby, and write what transpires over a week’s period of time. Through **simulation**, students learn their math skills and language arts skills.

“Oh, please keep reading! You always stop at the most interesting part.” Teachers hear this often as they read to students each day. This daily reading has fostered a desire to read books. Students beg for passes to the media center to independently select the book of their choice. Many of their choices are those special “yellow dot” books that are **Accelerated Reader** books. Students enjoy reading the book, taking the test on the book, receiving the computer print out of the results, and earning points for rewards.

D3. How are resources made available to teachers and students for gathering information and sharing the results of their efforts?

The media center is not merely the geographical *center* of Cannons. It is a symbolic *center* where patrons and information flow. Our fully automated media center houses a collection of over 10,000 print and non-print items that is used by 364 students, 58 staff members, parents, and other stakeholders. The circulation for the first three months of 1998-1999 was 9,094 items.

Students may be found researching ocean animals, trying to identify the bug captured in a jar, browsing for that special *Hank the Cowdog* book, looking for a copy of *National Geographic World*,

using a computer to take an *Accelerated Reader (AR)* test, typing an assignment, writing a love note to Mom using a word processor, or visiting Paris via *Encarta*. One might also witness someone learning French words at a listening center, watching a video about whales, testing his/her skills on the *Geo-Safari* electronic game, or reading a book written by a Cannons' student. Students have free access to the media center for 30 minutes before school, and 2 hours after school. A student also frequently visits the media center with his/her classmates for scheduled visits to work on coordinated curriculum activities and projects. Storytelling, book talks, and *Reader's Theatre* are activities students enjoy in the cozy story-well. Students also enjoy competition corner in the story-well as they "bone up" on all sorts of skills from math to geography.

The media center houses the television production studio, *Instructional Television (ITV)* taping center, **Student Publishing Center**, *Wee Deliver* in-school postal service, and the preschool room filled with materials for parents to check out. Another busy place in the media center is the faculty workroom where teachers die cut letters, laminate materials or collaborate with the media center staff to prepare and/or schedule materials needed for classroom instruction. The media specialist and teachers plan and work on units of study to provide opportunities for students to access, organize, interpret, and analyze needed information.

Reading is always a celebration. Students have enjoyed book fairs, book swaps, reading for points, pizza, popcorn and popsicles, book character dress up days, "pig-out" parties with *Miss Piggy*, be-bopping at a Fabulous Fifties Party, and shopping at the *AR* store. The staff of the media center strives to promote reading as a source of life-long pleasure and information. The liberal checkout policy encourages students to select a variety of reading materials. Students are encouraged to progress from membership in the Two-Point Club to the Master Reader Group in the **Accelerated Reader Program**. Their progress and achievements are posted every nine weeks in the media center on the **Reader Wall of Fame**. Students are encouraged to set monthly goals in *AR*, and the media center sponsors monthly and yearly incentives for individual and classroom readers.

D4. What technology applications are you using? How do they relate to your curricular goals and how do they support teaching and learning?

Educational technology must be integrated in the classroom. With classroom computer distribution, a whole new picture of technology integration emerges. The potential for systemic reform begins. The computer becomes a vehicle for inquiry-based, reflective, and energized instruction. Moving beyond drill and practice, the student engages in authentic and relevant instructional experiences with the teacher facilitating the learning experience. Students thrive in this highly interactive environment. It allows them to fashion instructional materials, or to use the classroom computer as a research station. Most importantly, the teacher can devise and facilitate a collaborative interaction with students. Students create materials to process their own learning. Cannons values flexibility, innovation, self-direction and collaborative problem solving. Increasingly, interdisciplinary learning teams are emphasized. With the heavy demands of the curriculum standards and accountability, interdisciplinary approaches are essential. Technology standards are incorporated into the state curriculum standards. As part of the instructional program, Office 97 is loaded on the network for student and teacher use.

Our desire has always been that our curriculum and operational needs drive the technology, rather than technology driving the curriculum. A technology committee gathered suggestions, attended technology seminars, researched and reviewed literature, and visited other schools with networks in place. With the national thrust of preparing students for the 21st century, we knew we had to prepare our students to be the employees of tomorrow. It was essential that they develop keyboarding skills, be able to communicate through word processing, know how to manipulate a database, and to be able to access and produce information in multimedia format. Because of our test scores in reading comprehension and vocabulary, we have purchased software to supplement the program. With those goals in mind, the technology committee brought software for the teachers to review. After that review, we added to our local area network *Kids Keys*, *UltraKey*, and *Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing* for keyboarding; the *Accelerated Reader Program* to assist our students in improving comprehension and vocabulary skills; *Student Writing Center* and *Storybook Weaver* for intermediate and primary word processing, *Information*

Finder, an online encyclopedia; *Search Plus*, an online library catalog; *SIRS*, a database of periodicals; *Print Shop* for teacher and student productivity; and *Hyperstudio* for students and teachers to create multimedia presentations. The computers in each classroom were interfaced with the television to allow group and individual work. Through this entire process, we learned that training and support were essential ingredients to ensure a comfortable, working knowledge of the software and hardware. As a result of these pioneer days, we urged the hiring of a district technology coordinator to handle the hardware issues. District 3 moved forward on these recommendations. We now have a district technology coordinator, a curriculum specialist, and an itinerate trainer who assists teachers in using software applications. Through training, teachers have developed *WebQuests*. Our teachers were the first in the district to develop their own web pages. Teachers use these pages to post information, *WebQuests*, and student work. We have four satellite channels and two instructional television channels.

E. Professional Community

E1. What opportunities do teachers and other staff have to build professional community that enhance their collective capacity to work together to support student learning?

"The nature of relationships among the adults who inhabit a school has more to do with the school's quality and character and with the accomplishments of its pupils than any other factor," said Roland Barth. The adults share a collective responsibility for student success. The physical education teacher on bus duty helps students with reading, a janitor checks on the academic progress of children needing encouragement, or the principal stops to read a story to a child.

Grade level classrooms are grouped together on halls with a common planning area and workroom. Through careful scheduling, at least one planning period weekly is allotted for teams to meet for developing units and sharing ideas. At the start of each week, our principal provides the faculty and staff memo, "**Short Takes**", which includes updates and events for the week. E-mail is used daily by faculty and staff members as a primary source of communication. Grade level teachers meet at least monthly with our principal to analyze test scores, align curriculum, address budget needs and any other concerns. Teachers and assistants are encouraged to attend in-services relevant to curriculum. Regular classroom teachers, principals, and all special area teachers recently attended an in-service with a special education consultant who addressed the needs of special students.

Shared governance teams have been established (B1). These teams meet to discuss curriculum planning, budget requests, discipline, scheduling, technology, and fine arts. School decisions are made through this process. Faculty meetings are used as an opportunity to share creative ideas, successful strategies, or to report on conferences. Community members, parents, administrators and teachers combine to form the *Act 135*, *Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)*, and *School Improvement* committees. Teachers serve on district committees for report cards, curriculum standards, and curriculum guides.

Building our professional community also includes participating in team-building activities at Bishop-Gravitt Center in Aiken, where we learned to better rely on our peers for problem solving. Each summer, our principal invites the entire faculty and staff to her lake home to strengthen faculty bonds. Faculty and staff gather for **Teachers on the Town** to share an evening meal. We look forward to our monthly **Rise and Shine** morning when we enjoy a time of fellowship and a breakfast biscuit. The **Sunshine** committee plans special events. Collegiality is not spontaneous, but must be developed. We have numerous opportunities to enhance our capacity to work together. We know that faculty teamwork is indeed directly related to student success.

E2. How does a coherent approach to professional development for teachers and other staff ensure their ability to implement effectively the school's curriculum, instructional strategies, and support system? How do organizational arrangements, such as time and teaching assignments, and school norms and culture, make professional development a priority?

Staff development opportunities are diverse and plentiful. At the district level, we suggest topics for district wide in-service days. Our district also provides time and substitutes for classroom teachers to attend district grade level meetings to develop standards and align curriculum. Many district funded

graduate classes have been offered including technology courses and science curriculum courses.

At the school level, teachers are encouraged to provide input on topics that address the needs of our students, the mission of our school, and professional growth. Release time is granted during the school day for essential training related to the Jostens' computer program. The media specialist conducts sessions, as needed, to inform and familiarize teachers and staff members of the ever-changing advancements in our networking and technology. Teachers have received training in **Reading Recovery** techniques and the **Cunningham Four Blocks** method of reading instruction. We are given opportunities to attend workshops and seminars such as: *Hands-On Science*, *Elementary Restructuring Relief*, *How to Meet the Needs of the Difficult Child*, *Learning in a Successful Multi-age Classroom*, *Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum*, *Integrating Effective Teaching Models*, the *Clemson Reading Conference*, and the *EduTech Conference*. Classroom teachers returning from workshops and seminars give an overview and share materials and new ideas. During the 1995-1996 school year, several teachers conducted sessions on **Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligence**. Teachers have presented cooperative learning strategies for high school Teacher Cadets. In addition to various workshops and seminars, teachers enjoy visiting other outstanding schools in North Carolina and South Carolina. During the summer of 1998, several teachers participated in the SC System for **Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT)** training through the district office.

Cannons Elementary works closely with area colleges and universities to make sure that student teachers are placed with master teachers. Practicum students, tutors, and mentors are welcomed. Several courses have been tailored by the University of South Carolina at Spartanburg (USCS) to meet the curriculum needs in the areas of whole language and science.

Our principal encourages teachers to participate in professional organizations. Teachers strive to further our professional growth by working diligently to receive Master's Degrees and beyond. Approximately 75% of our faculty have Master's Degrees.

Teachers are given a comprehensive calendar at the beginning of each year, which contains a schedule for meetings such as **grade level, shared governance, School-Based Assistance Team (SBAT), faculty, and School Improvement Council (SIC)**. During these meetings the principal, faculty, and staff discuss student issues and keep the lines of communication flowing.

Professional development for teachers and staff is a priority among the dedicated, enthusiastic educators at Cannons. Much time and effort are put into the development of instructional strategies and a strong support system.

E3. How does the school tailor professional development and support to take account of differences in career experience or professional responsibility?

New teachers and those undertaking a change in responsibilities are provided with both formal and informal support. This year two new positions were added, a Reading Recovery teacher and a Therapeutic Preschool Daycare. New teachers are part of an **Induction Program**. To welcome them, the district administration served them lunch and presented each teacher with the book, *The First Days of School*, by Harry Wong. They were each introduced to their mentor, an experienced teacher at their grade-level who would meet throughout the year. New teachers are evaluated through the *Assisting, Developing, and Evaluation Professional Teaching (ADEPT)* Program. Students, along with the principal, interview and introduce new staff on **Cannons Press Club (CPC)** News. New teachers receive regular feedback on performance from their mentor and principal. They attend a course at University of South Carolina at Spartanburg entitled, *Teaching: Transition from Theory to Practice*. During the class, new teachers bond with each other, commiserate, and receive encouragement and support. The program is designed to ensure that the teacher is successful. As part of the work of the School Based Assistance Team, new teachers are encouraged to observe master teachers. **Second-Year Teachers** are evaluated with **TEAM**. The teacher is evaluated according to ten performance dimensions by a three-member team. After a minimum of six unannounced observations, the team reaches a consensus decision. **Continuing Contract Teachers** are evaluated and supported through a **Goals-Based Evaluation (GBE)** model. Each teacher undertaking GBE, works cooperatively with the principal to establish specific staff development goals. Of the three goals required, one must relate to increasing student achievement, and a second one to

demonstrating technology proficiency, and a third goal relates to personal staff development. Teachers meet in **Shared Governance** groups for the purpose of decision making.

Cannons Elementary provides numerous opportunities for teacher leadership. Teachers serve on and chair various committees. Teachers conduct workshops and present ideas at staff meetings for other teachers, develop district curriculum standards and revise progress reports. A wide variety of staff development opportunities are available to all staff members. Our **paraprofessionals** attend workshops. **Cafeteria personnel** attend seminars to keep abreast of requirements. Our **guidance counselor** attends workshops such as the SC School Counselors Association and others. Our **school secretaries and janitors** receive training in technology and other areas related to their jobs. The **computer lab assistant** attends technology training with our **media specialist**. They then share their knowledge with the faculty. They also receive training to troubleshoot technology problems. The district technology trainer conducts new teacher orientation sessions and after-school training.

E4. How does your school use the processes and results of student assessment, staff evaluation, and school review to support professional growth? How has teacher professional development improved teaching and resulted in higher student achievement and success?

Teachers have opportunities to receive feedback on their performance through formal and informal methods. The **ADEPT** model for teacher evaluation has been implemented in our district. This evaluation model may be *Goals Based Evaluation (GBE)* for continuing contract teachers, or *Team Based Evaluation and Assistance Model (TEAM)* for annual and second year teachers. **ADEPT** evaluation empowers teachers to be responsible for their professional growth and development. For those teachers who are not being formally evaluated, two personal goals are identified as **Job Performance Standards**. These goals are based on teacher self-evaluation of areas where they would like to improve their teaching techniques.

The District 3 test coordinator provides feedback for teachers by assisting them with the interpretation of standardized test results. The district, with the assistance of teachers from each school, has developed and implemented the **Criterion Referenced Test (CRT)**, which is administered two times per year. This provides teachers with immediate feedback on student understanding of skill areas. Our faculty completes a comprehensive planning questionnaire. This involves a detailed analysis of the class, as well as long range plans for the year. Our principal reviews these plans and provides necessary feedback. She stays current on individual teaching and learning styles, as well as discipline techniques, through informal classroom visits. **Professional development** is strongly encouraged and supported. Staff development, such as attending Cunningham's *Four Blocks* workshops, promotes consistency and provides opportunities for sharing among the staff. There has been an emphasis on a school-wide language arts initiative, which has promoted an even stronger sense of school community. The Department of Education has recognized Cannons as a **second year Exemplary Writing Award** winner.

Our principal recognizes jobs-well-done in her weekly "Short Takes" memo. A representative is appointed to send meritorious information for *Share the Pride*, a program held during monthly school board meetings to recognize outstanding contributions and awards. They are also recognized in the district publication, *Inside Three*. Excellent teaching is recognized by our principal and fellow teachers at staff meetings, on *CPC News* (A4), and **The Bear Facts** (A1).

As a result of professional growth, teachers are aggressive in their pursuit of grant opportunities. Two teachers received a district grant used to encourage reading and to provide a book for each child to take home. Another teacher received a grant to create a book-publishing center. Selected students' writings are bound in hardback form or in spiral bound format. One teacher's grant entitled, **Project COMPUTE**, provides opportunities for everyone to become writers. A laptop computer and educational software motivate students to read and write. A Junior League Grant provided cooking equipment for a class to learn measurement, management, and social skills. Three teachers received a grant for purchasing materials and implementing a new reading program. Our guidance counselor received grants entitled **Coping Skills for Successful Living** and **Care and Respect for Everyone**. Three **Learn and Serve America** grants were also awarded to our school. Our art teacher received a grant to implement a creative movement program. Our school is the recipient of a federal grant, **The Three Faces of Need**, which will

provide summer, and after-school academic instructional programs.

F. Leadership and Educational Vitality

F1. How does leadership move your school toward its vision/mission? How is the instructional leadership role defined and implemented? How are resources aligned with goals?

If you concentrate the essence of leadership into vision, flexibility, compassion, judgment, problem solving ability and energy, you see our principal, Donna Lipscomb. Known as the honorary mayor of Cannons Campground in recognition of the school's importance as the center of the community, our principal whirls through the day. One would think that this 120 pound, 5'2"foot, administrator would understand that some things aren't possible. She doesn't. She is the ultimate example of optimism and devotion. Her attitude is contagious. Our principal led the school in restructuring the curriculum to better meet the needs of our students. Through Focus Groups (C3) and parent surveys, Mrs. Lipscomb measures the beat of the community. Her instructional leadership influences faculty, staff, students, as well as the community at large. She is our encourager, facilitator, and director. She believes that our school must be ready and responsive to the child. This leads into her conviction that we love each child into learning. Ours is a school where children come first, a discovery place where we share in the daily roles of learning. If money isn't available to implement a project, we mobilize to write a grant to fund our initiative. First to participate in the **Twelve Schools Project**, a State Department of Education restructuring initiative, Cannons began the process of aligning standards and developing portfolio assessments. She also led the school to **Associate School** status, another restructuring effort in the state. She is usually in the halls or in a classroom. Ask her third, fourth, and fifth graders about her timed multiplication tests. When she discovered students were not learning their math facts, she decided to help. Once our principal dressed up as **Miss Piggy**, because K-1 students exceeded their reading goals. She wore a poodle skirt when students reached fifty points in **Accelerated Reader**. The enthusiasm and optimism helped improve attitudes and scores in math and reading. Every day she greets children at the door with her smiling face offering her encouragement and motivating students for their educational day. Our mission and our vision become more of a reality with each passing day. Our course is led by our principal. We create for each child an atmosphere of love and compassion while accepting each child as the individual s/he is. We help the child discover his/her uniqueness and recognize his/her potential. We strive to provide experiences which help each child develop a desire for learning; to teach each child the basic skills and concepts in all areas of learning; to develop each child's understanding of citizenship; and to instill a desire to strive for excellence. Our principal encourages faculty and staff to fully utilize resources to meet the needs of our students. **Grade level and faculty meetings** are used for the purpose of identifying needs and concerns. Our principal believes that the faculty should be the decision-makers regarding the use of school funds. As a faculty, we are very involved in the budget process. Using our ACT 135 Plan, we outline by grade level our specific needs and then set our priorities. To supplement our needs and desires, grant writing is encouraged. When funds were needed for our science lab, our principal contacted a community businessman whose company provided financial assistance to buy materials. Our principal, faculty, staff, and community ensure that resources are utilized to maximize our instructional goals.

F2. How does the school engage its internal and external stakeholders in leadership and decision making? What is the relationship between the principal and stakeholders?

The Cannons' family is actively involved in daily development, delivery and diagnosis of effective implementation of our instructional objectives and goals. The **School Improvement Council (SIC)**, consisting of our principal and elected teachers and parents, meets monthly. The **SIC** uses the results of surveys and input from all stakeholders to assess and revise Cannons' goals and objectives each year. The Action Teams of Act 135, Safe Schools, Technology, and Curriculum, made up of parents, teachers, and community members meet to evaluate and revise our goals and objectives. Our **PTO Board** meets in August to plan programs and prepare a budget. The **PTO** is active in supporting students and teachers through their fundraising efforts. Our principal meets regularly with the **Shared Governance Committee (B1)** to discuss the instructional issues that need to be addressed. When faculty meetings are

held, teachers are prepared to discuss these issues and to reach consensus when needed. Because of the “open door” policy of our principal, all stakeholders have the opportunity to participate in school improvement. Each year parents receive the **Annual School Renewal Report** that lists strategies accomplished and upcoming goals and objectives for the school year. The **Student Council** and the **Youth Advisory Council** (B1) offer ideas and suggestions. Students write letters or stop her in the hall to make special requests.

F3. What kind of participatory school improvement process operates at your school? How did your school prepare its Self-Assessment for the Blue Ribbon Schools Program and how did this initiative relate to other school improvement and planning efforts?

With unity of purpose, Cannons' administration and staff continue to work diligently--teaching students. Many examples of programs and initiatives unite the faculty. Several years ago Cannons applied for and received *Associate School* status. With this recognition, Cannons immediately accelerated its restructuring process. The faculty received staff development on building consensus, developing an integrated curriculum, and infusing the use of technology into the curriculum. Cannons became one of seventy model schools for South Carolina. Examples of processes that began include the *Healthy School Program*, *Exemplary Writing Program*, and *Family Literacy*.

An in-school self-management organization, *Shared Governance* (B1), accepted the proposal to apply for the *Blue Ribbon Award*. Consensus was reached to move our school into the application process. This recommendation was brought before the **School Improvement Council**, who supported the proposal. It is not unusual for Cannons Elementary to embark upon new endeavors. Therefore, in March of 1998, committees were established, roles were defined, and a timeline was created to complete the *Blue Ribbon* proposal. All teachers, staff members and many parents were involved

F4. How does your school leadership use the most current information about education to promote continuous improvement in your school? How does such evidence influence decision-making?

Our principal and staff evaluate the students' instructional needs based on current test scores and past performances. We then decide areas of academic focus for instructional improvement and/or staff development needs. Based on current research of effective instructional models, our principal encourages teachers to visit and observe other schools using these methods. Methods include the **Cunningham's Four Blocks** reading model, **Carbo's Reading Styles**, **Multi-Intelligence Learning Styles**, **multi-age classrooms and looping**. Strengths of individual staff members as instructional leaders promote them into leadership roles to direct innovative instructional programs and to make presentations for the faculty. Other groups help make decisions to promote continuous improvement. Our school curriculum representatives, discipline committee, technology committee, fine arts committee, **School Improvement Council**, and **Act 135 Team** are equally important in evaluating and applying current information. We realize that well-informed stakeholders become the best advocates.

F5. As you look back over the last five years, what conditions or changes have contributed most to the overall success of your school?

Much has changed over the last five years. In January of 1995, we moved from a fifty-three-year-old facility into a spacious and modern building. Our new school's accessibility affords us the opportunity to fully integrate technology into our daily life. Each morning a live in-house television broadcast team brings announcements and features produced by students directly into each classroom. All classrooms are equipped with two or three state-of-the-art multimedia computers, which allow students access to the *Internet* and school-wide software such as *Accelerated Reader* and *Jostens' Tomorrow's Promise*. Curriculum standards developed at each grade level by our teachers, grants received, and the opportunities for staff development have contributed to the overall success of our school. Programs such as the **Therapeutic Preschool Program** and the **21st Century Community Learning Center** are specific examples of changes that will allow our students to be more successful.

Instructional practices have evolved. Computer instruction has been transformed from drill and practice to active, problem-solving simulations and scenarios. Pedagogy has emphasized constructivist theory, particularly in the science and the mathematics classes. More child-centered and child-friendly, the program allows free interaction among children in cooperative learning groups. Writing has been

incorporated into the core of the program.

Cannons has become increasingly proactive. The school has become more aggressive in reaching out to its population. After school and summer programming has been added. Violence prevention, conflict resolution, crisis intervention teams and classroom buddies have been added to prevent mishaps and problems. Three major pieces of legislation have impacted what and how we deliver education. The **School to Work Transition Act** has strengthened the rigor and relevance of instruction. Career connections and discussion of grade level standards has been reinforced by a second major piece of legislation, Act 135, The **Early Childhood Development Act**. This legislation has emphasized academic acceleration, family centered education, and early childhood education. Finally, the third major legislation, The **South Carolina Accountability Act of 1998** reinforces the other pieces of legislation by placing accountability measures into the law. We must meet high academic standards.

F6. What is your vision for integrating technology into your school, including benchmarks that guide your plans, problems that must be overcome, and training approaches? To what extent and how is technology used to improve management efficiency and effectiveness?

Computers help us communicate with others, celebrate successes, inform the public, publish student work, work collaboratively with others on classroom projects, establish and reinforce curriculum standards in core areas and use a variety of sources to formulate ideas. In the Information Age, educators must innovate constantly. Our world values flexibility, innovation, self-direction and collaborative problem solving. Harold Wenglinsky observes that "eighth graders whose teachers used computers mostly for simulations and applications--generally associated with higher-order thinking--performed better on NAEP than students whose teachers did not." In both fourth and eighth grades, students whose teachers had professional development in computers outperformed students whose teachers didn't." Wenglinsky, in fact, says he was struck by the fact that any amount of professional development translated into student achievement gains. Retrieving, formatting and presenting information, composing portfolios on *Hyperstudio*, and printing needed lists and information from the student database are visions becoming realities. All teachers have been trained to become proficient users of technology. The media specialist works to troubleshoot technical problems and to identify application needs.

Having a local and wide-area network has increased management efficiency and effectiveness. Work orders are transmitted electronically, as *e-mail* streamlines communication on all levels. The *Accutab* system manages student breakfast and lunch accounts. Student and personnel information is managed by the *Osiris* system. *Internet* access at each computer enables immediate communication and access to information. The *Unison Catalog* provides a catalog of material housed in the media center. Diagnostic tools like **STAR** and Jostens' **JCAT** enable teachers to access the progress of students. Our television distribution system and satellite technology provide equal access to instructional programs for students and staff.

F7. What do you consider the major educational challenges your school must face over the next five years, and how do you plan to address them?

Cannons is prepared for the challenges of sweeping reform, the *Accountability Act* and *PACT*. The standards of achievement that our students will be asked to meet to earn their high school diplomas have impacted our instructional program. With the funds from *The Three Faces of Need*, we will extend the school day an hour and a half, the school week with a Saturday component, and the school year with a summer program. We will continue to review our five-year plan to create appropriate objectives and strategies to use technology and state-of-the-art instructional methods and materials and remain current in technology's advancements. Technological changes will require continued changes in approach and in infrastructure. School to work initiatives must expand, particularly in areas with families of low socioeconomic status. Continued emphasis will continue for career connections, character development and, for older children, use of Paideia seminars to discuss issues of ethics and character. We expect to expand and refine on the vision as the School as a Community Center. The pieces are in place to move into a seamless interface with social service agencies and community support services. Without this interface, the students will not be able to achieve their full potential. Children, who are cold, hungry and hurt, do not learn. They concentrate on survival, on protecting themselves.

G. School, Family, and Community Partnerships

G1. What are the goals and priorities of your school, family, and community partnerships? How have your school and community both improved as a result of these partnerships and how did you measure the improvements?

The lights dim, the music starts and the show begins. Parents, teachers, students and community musicians work together each year to present a theatre-quality musical. Cannons has become the community's outlet for creative expression. From the art gallery to cookouts, the principal and staff encourage all members of the community to actively participate in education.

With such a large base of interested stakeholders, Cannons has been able to set partnership goals by collecting data and prioritizing the needs of the community. The *Cannons' Literacy Advisory Committee*, comprised of teachers, clients, the principal, and community agency representatives, has systematically inventoried existing partnerships, set up partnership goals for long-term expansion of the base, and put into place activities that will fulfill those goals. Agencies such as the *Family Care Council* and *Adult Writing And Reading Education (AWARE)* help to fit goals into the county structure for literacy. The principal and guidance counselor help reference specific school and district initiatives, and the literacy clients contribute invaluable information on gangs, dangerous neighborhoods, and barriers to families.

One specific, highly successful partnership effort is the *Therapeutic Preschool*. During the 1996-97 school year, a group of children were identified as having difficulty with behavior and academic growth. In looking at the genograms of these families, the *Literacy Advisory Committee* realized that five families and a total of 14 children were high-risk for problems.

The *Literacy Advisory Council* prioritized the barriers to these families as: low literacy levels of the parents; developmental delay of the children; lack of transportation; lack of social skills training; lack of employment skills training; and poor nutrition. The goal was to provide a nurturing, inviting educational environment for parents and young children that would include: literacy and employment skills training for the adults, educational opportunities for the children, and social skills training. A plan of action was developed that included the development of partnerships with other state and local agencies, as well as private businesses. The result was a contractual agreement with the *Department of Health and Human Services* to help fund a therapeutic program, consultative collaboration with the *Medical University of South Carolina*, training and staff from the *Family Care Council*, and referral agreements with the *Department of Social Services*, *AWARE*, The *Department of Mental Health*, and the district social worker. Partnership with the district food service provides family style meals for clients and children, as area colleges and universities are providing volunteers and work-study students to help implement the plan.

The result is an intensive 11 month, therapeutic program for children and adults that incorporates: four hours of education per day for 3, 4, and 5 year-olds, four hours per week for adults that includes parenting, conflict resolution, basic literacy, *General Equivalency Diploma (GED)* class, pre-employment training, social skills training, two home visits per month for each family, direct interventions when warranted, including trips to Mental Health and the Housing Authority, and transportation and a meal for every child and adult. **We saw an area of need, prioritized the barriers, and used agency and business partnerships to reach the goal without burdening the district's budget with new programs.** In fact, the Therapeutic Preschool is financially self-sufficient. The results achieved for each of the participating stakeholders are far reaching. The school district has a program for families that addresses the multi-systemic barriers to success in life. *DSS and Mental Health* are able to offer our service to families in need who live in our area. *Family Care Council* is able to use their expertise to reach more families, and *AWARE* is able to refer clients to our program when options for basic literacy are limited. The clients receive free classes in parenting, pre-employment skills, social skills and basic and advanced literacy. The children get a "jump-start" on their education and are able to work on social skills at an age that reaps the most success. Our society as a whole is benefited when these parents, all single mothers, are able to find employment and give back to the world those very skills they worked so hard to learn. These results will be positive for generations.

The Three Faces of Need is an additional collaborative grant effort to offer these same principles to grades three, four, and five. The program extends the school day and school year for 760 under-achieving students. After-school programs, Saturday activities and summer experiences augment the regular school curriculum by responding to each student's weaknesses. Cultural appreciation, health issues, career choices, and character development are integrated into our life skills program. This consortium effort has stepped out of the box by extending itself beyond regional and district borders.

Our *School/Community Interaction* program provides professional arts and arts educational programs in the evenings, special events, and continuous visual arts in the **Cannons Art Gallery**. The program reaches out to culturally diverse populations. Through the use of multimedia publicity, invitations, and incentives, Cannons encourages people from all walks of life to attend. *Cannons Art Gallery* hosts a new art show each month with a reception for the community and artists. The arts performances presented in our **Little Theatre** include *Hub City Music Makers II*; the Russian Folk Singer, Sasha; "Oriental Paintings" by Dr. Hisung Ju; the opera, "Amahl, and the Night Visitors" by *Opera Carolina*; percussionist Michael Bashaw, and Japanese storytelling by Motoco. Each year a professional musical director is hired to produce a community show using talents of the community and the school. **These programs are supported in part by The Arts Partnership of Greater Spartanburg and its donors, The County and City of Spartanburg, and the South Carolina Arts Commission, which receives support from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional support is received from Spartanburg School District 3 and the Cannons' Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Other contributors are Abco, Diversco, Sam's Club, Ingles, Hoechst Celanese, and other school business partnerships.**

Our success in school, family and community partnership is evident through parent responses to the District Needs Assessment Survey for 1997-98. This survey shows the parent satisfaction with our school the highest of all other schools in the district. It is felt that programs reaching out and involving parents in the educational process of our children contribute to these high marks.

G2. How does your school involve families in their children's education?

Our principal feels that parents are their children's first and most important teachers. As such, parents are given the information they need to positively influence their children's progress in school. The school web page gives special activities for each class. Student and parent response is encouraged through the e-mail portion of the page. Parents are invited into the school for parent-teacher conferences twice a year and teachers are always available in the afternoons for additional parent contacts. Cannons has parent conferences with all children's parents, even if we must provide transportation or go to the home for a visit.

Several programs provide home visitation on a regular basis, including the **Therapeutic Preschool, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten**, and the **Preschool Handicapped Class**. **Family Learning Fun Time** is offered in the fall for three and four-year-old children and their parents. This multigenerational learning time is facilitated by a certified early childhood education teacher and is taught in a kindergarten classroom. Parents are encouraged to use parenting techniques such as active listening and specific praise with their children. **Older children who may have problems with conflict resolution are able to attend a ten week "Back in Control" class with their parents.** Every effort is made to include the parent in the intervention for a child with behavior problems.

Our speech clinician used musical family members to augment the developmental language learning experience in the preschool special education class with instruments and singing. The performances were videotaped, enabling a student to take a video copy to share with family and school. Fifth grade language disabled students took tape recorders home, interviewed family members, and brought back educational, as well as entertaining accounts of family members' lives and talents. One student played a tape she had made of her grandmother singing gospel music for the class. Another brought interesting accounts of life at school in the "old days", as remembered by her father. The parents enjoyed being asked to contribute to their child's educational experience with their child being the catalyst in the exchange. When our speech clinician brought her own mother to sing for Mother's Day, they appeared on **CPC News (A4)** and

encouraged the students to think about how they can have fun with *their* mothers, as well. They were challenged to write and/or tell their teachers about it.

Volunteerism is an important factor in Cannons' success. Parents, grandparents, college students, high school students, and members of the community are invited to help with the publishing center where children have the books that they write bound as keepsakes. These volunteers chaperone for field trips, tutor children in academics, help with weekly newsletters, read to children, help teachers with bulletin boards or assist children with special art projects.

Volunteers are recruited through information sheets that are distributed to all parents at registration. These surveys give Cannons the information we need in order to match potential volunteers with projects that utilize their skills and interests. Area churches and senior citizen groups also contribute through donations of children's clothes and volunteer hours. In a reciprocal manner, Cannons' students perform at area churches and civic clubs with readings, musical selections and art displays. Volunteers are honored at the end of each school year with an awards banquet.

Cannons involves families in decision making in every aspect of school life. When the new school was in the planning process, a team of parents accompanied the principal to view other schools in the southeast. As a result of this collaborative effort, three conference rooms were added, as well as a separate theatre and gym. The pride is evident on parents' faces as they walk into a building designed to meet the needs of the entire community.

The **Family Literacy program** has a parent advisory committee that sends annual surveys in order to improve the effectiveness of the program. Changes that have resulted from this input are longer hours, childcare during classes, and computer literacy in addition to academic lessons.

The **Arts For Me** program involves communication between student, parent and the school arts program. Together, they view and experience the arts and complete questionnaires on these programs. At the end of the year, students who have attended the most programs with their adult guests, are awarded certificates and trophies by the school. Our **Cannons' Hall of Fame** program focuses on successful community individuals who become models for students. They are invited to come to school to give students the opportunity to interview them and write about their successes. Their photographs and messages to students hang in the Hall of Fame. Periodically, these writings are displayed on Internet web pages, and books are also published for the community.

Home/School communication is a critical element in assuring that the needs of the Cannons' students are realized. Opportunities for parental interaction are planned throughout the school year. Examples include the following: **Kindergarten orientation** during the spring gives "new" Cannons' parents an opportunity to visit and tour the school; **Parent Teacher Organization (PTO)** meetings are held monthly with special programs to involve the Cannons' community; parent/teacher conferences are scheduled twice each year, and on an as needed or desired basis; parents are updated with student progress reports on a weekly/bi-weekly basis; meetings are held to discuss individual test scores of students and to supply parents with the results; **parent visitations** and **cookouts** occur simultaneously throughout the school year. The **Family Science** and **Family Math** programs provide joint learning opportunities for families; Parents are surveyed for ideas concerning the needs of the school and students; positive phone calls and postcards are exciting for parents and students to receive from the teacher; our weekly newsletter, **Bear Facts**, keeps parents informed of the exciting events at our school; the **School Improvement Council** meets seven times each year to develop the strategic plan. The PTO executive board meets regularly to identify any student needs that the PTO can supply; Cannons **has a web page** for parents to access information. All teachers have an individual web page.

G3. How does the school support the needs and concerns of families?

The school supports children by combining efforts with district personnel, church groups, and agencies. Integrated health and social services are available at the school site, such as individual and group therapy for parents involved in the **Therapeutic Preschool** (G1) and individual therapy for children with behavior or emotional problems. A **full-time nurse** dispenses medication, attends to children's illnesses and accidents, and consults with teachers on issues of student and teacher health. The school has a **full-time guidance counselor** and the expertise of a **full-time social worker** and **police**

officer assigned to the district. These professionals help refer families to appropriate agencies, such as *Department of Health and Human Services*, the *Health Department*, *Mental Health*, *BabyNet*, and other state and local agencies.

The facility itself was designed to meet the needs of handicapped individuals. All areas are wheelchair accessible, and children are not denied educational opportunities because of incontinence or physical problems. Extra assistants and volunteers are used to help children with disabilities, and with **AWARE** (G1) who has helped in the pursuit of translators for non-English speaking parents during parent-teacher conferences, school meetings, and *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* meetings.

The **After school program**, once held for those children whose special needs were not severe enough to be identified for special education services, has expanded to include all children. Students benefit through homework assistance, enrichment in the arts, additional computer exposure, physical education, and time in the media center. Snacks and transportation are provided.

Adult education classes are held each week during the school day. These classes include nutrition education, social skills training, pre-employment skills training, and parenting. Transportation and a meal are provided. This program is provided through a collaboration among **Adult Education, Family Literacy, and Therapeutic Preschool** (G1).

G4. How are educational resources in the school and the community used to extend learning opportunities for students, teachers, and families?

Our students, teachers, and families have a wealth of educational resources to extend learning opportunities. The **computer lab** is available for developing skills for students, teachers, and families. Teachers have ongoing technology education provided through in-service workshops, as well as, state-of-the-art equipment for use in the classroom. Teachers expand their knowledge in use of technology by attending classes outside the district and state and bringing that knowledge back to the faculty.

The art teacher uses the **art gallery** (where water colors, oil paintings, sculpture, and pottery are displayed) to broaden students' experiences and concepts about art. This interaction with art allows students to understand that artists express ideas and feelings through various media. This interaction also gives them ideas for application in their own artistic processes. Teachers, students, and families get full advantage of this gallery that is in the entrance of our school, thereby bombarding them with visual images and information that draw their interest.

District 3 high school Teacher Cadets conduct practicum activities at our school. Enthusiastic student teachers from **Converse College** and the **University of South Carolina at Spartanburg** are beneficial additions to our classrooms.

Visiting administrative "shadows" come to follow our principal in her daily duties and learn how she copes with the variety and scope of challenges that are part of a typical workday in educating our children.

Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Girl Scout programs are available after school. Learning-for-life career education is developed, and summer academic programs have been implemented. **A Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) officer** serves Cannons' students and promotes drug-free education. Several students are chosen annually to attend the Spartanburg County summer DARE Camp. **Local businesses, including Progress Lighting, Abco, Diversco, Sams, Tileco Flooring, Ingles, and Hoechst Celanese, provide supportive resources.** Opportunities for further learning are made available through the: Spartanburg Art Museum, Spartanburg Nature and Science Center, Spartanburg Little Theatre, Spartanburg Ballet Guild, Walnut Grove Plantation, Cowpens Battleground, Peace Center for Performing Arts, Spartanburg County Public Library, Roper Mountain Science Center, Greenville Zoo, Hollywild Zoo, Greenville/Spartanburg Jetport, Spartanburg Chamber of Commerce, Spartanburg Fire Department, and United States Postal Service.

H. Indicators of Success

H1. What is your school's overall approach to assessment? How do your methods align with your educational vision/mission and curriculum? What questions about assessment is your school currently addressing?

The entire family at Cannons is committed to encourage, enrich and improve each student in all areas of life including self-esteem, social, behavioral and academics. The primary goal is for each child to make continuous improvements that are assessed in a variety of methods. The improvement of standardized testing scores is an essential part of the assessment strategy.

As stated in our school vision, Cannons Elementary is steeped in history and focused on the future. We strive to enable all students to thrive as productive citizens in a global society, as we ensure challenging and relevant learning experiences in a safe, nurturing environment.

Language arts assessments include individual **student portfolios to show student growth, writing journals, Standardized Test for Assessment of Reading (STAR), Jostens' Tomorrow's Promise, Jostens' Comprehensive Assessment Test (JCAT), Accelerated Reader, and the District 3 Criterion Reference Test (H2)**. Authentic assessments include Hyperstudio presentations, independent/cooperative group student projects, simulations, and teacher-made rubrics with open-ended responses.

Other tools for reporting progress include teacher/student conferences, parent/teacher conferences, checklists, and weekly/ biweekly progress reports. Two parent/teacher conferences are planned at the end of the first and third nine weeks of school. These conferences target student strengths and weaknesses. Additional conferences are planned as needed. In the beginning of the school year, **Academic Assistance Plans** are developed for each at-risk student in grades one through five. Parents, students, and teachers all meet together to discuss strategies to help their children improve (H2). The traditional emphasis on assessment of progress in specific areas is shown on a detailed report card. Report cards vary at each grade level to reflect appropriate standards as stated in the current *SC Curriculum Standards*.

To address current issues concerning assessment, teachers are adjusting classroom assessment techniques. Teachers challenge students with higher level assessments by presenting open-ended response and multiple step problems. Teachers utilize sample questions from *PACT, NAEP* and *TIMMS*.

H2. How do you use assessment results to understand and improve student and school performance? How do data influence decision-making?

Standardized test results are analyzed yearly. Administrators and teachers meet monthly by grade level to make adjustments to the curriculum in the areas indicating weakness. Additions such as *Daily Oral Language, Daily Oral Geography, Accelerated Reader, and Cunningham's Four Blocks* strategies have been recent additions to strengthen the curriculum. The After school program (C6) is a direct result of test analysis. Low performing students receive 33% more instructional time in reading and mathematics.

Each teacher completes a class profile at the beginning of the year for the purpose of focusing instruction on individual student needs. A class profile includes the following: standardized test score results for the previous four years and identification of students with special needs and accommodations. These profiles are given to the principal to ensure teacher accountability. These plans are updated at the end of the year. District wide in-services are designed with teacher input to address indicated areas of concerns.

Extensive long-range goals are written annually by each teacher, and these goals reflect the socioeconomic/cultural background and academic levels of each student. In accordance with the new SC PACT standards, **Academic Assistance Plans** are written for students at risk of performing poorly academically and/or socially. The identification of these students is based upon low performance on standardized tests, below grade performance in the classroom, previous retention, and teacher judgement. In September, a parent/teacher/student conference is held, and specific interventions are written into the **Academic Assistance Plan**. This plan holds parent, student, and teacher accountable for student success.

The **Criterion Referenced Test (CRT)** is a district diagnostic assessment test administered in the early fall and early spring. Results provide mastery, partial mastery, and non-mastery for all students (including special education) in grades two through five on district and state language arts and math standards. Teachers analyze these results to adjust instruction/curriculum as needed.

H3. What assessment data are communicated to students, parents, and the community? What is the purpose of these communications? How does the school ensure that these stakeholders understand the standards for judgment and the meaning of the data?

Communication is a key element to ensure student success. A comprehensive report of standardized assessment results is compiled in the Cannons Elementary Annual School Report (F2). This report is sent to each parent in the fall. Parents and community members receive the district newsletter, *Inside Three*, a quarterly publication that contains district and school achievements, news, and explanations of assessment data. In addition, an annual district community *Report to the People* highlights achievement results. In the spring, standardized test results are published in the daily newspaper, distributed to parents and posted on the website which contains district and school assessment data (D4).

Individual student data is provided to parents in a multitude of ways. Weekly or bi-weekly progress reports are sent to all students and parents. Quarterly report cards have been completely redesigned to provide detailed information on specific standards for academics, work and behavior habits. (C7) For example, the fifth grade progress report has over thirty-five specific skills just for language arts! A student's progress, as shown on the report card, is explained in a personal parent/teacher conference at the end of the first and third nine-week grading period.

All first graders participate in a readiness test (Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery). Results from this state required diagnostic tool are discussed at the first parent/teacher conference. Teachers offer suggestions of ways that parents can assist. Each spring, our guidance counselor presents a session to assist parents in test data interpretation. Suggestions are given to parents for fostering growth.

H4. What standardized tests (norm-referenced) developed on the national, state, or district level has your school given in the last five years? What are the results for the last five years?

The Metropolitan Achievement Tests, Seventh Edition (MAT7) were administered to students in grades two through five for the four year period 1994-95 through 1997-98. The MAT7 was not administered prior to the 1994-95 school year. The MAT7 is a nationally normed-referenced test which assesses reading (vocabulary and comprehension), mathematics (concepts, problem solving procedures), and language (pre-writing, composing, editing). The combined score of these three areas is referred to as the 3 R's Total. See attached charts for longitudinal data expressed in normal curve equivalents, NCE's. Cannons' students show consistent and significant gains in all three areas assessed. **Chart 1** tracks the fifth grade class of 1997-98, showing second grade students of 1994-95 as they move to third (1995-96), fourth (1996-97) and fifth (1997-98) grades. For this four-year period, students increased 3 R's Total NCE by 10.4 points, from 45.8 to 56.2. Reading increased from 41.2 to 48.2, a 7.0 gain; mathematics from 58.5 to 61.2, a 2.7 gain; and language from 45.6 to 58.1, a 12.5 gain. **Chart 2** tracks the fifth grade class of 1996-97, showing third grade students of 1994-95 as they move to fourth (1995-96) and fifth (1996-97). For this three-year period, students increased 3 R's Total NCE by 5.4 points, from 52.0 to 57.4. Reading increased from 48.9 to 51.7, a 2.8 gain; mathematics from 57.2 to 61.5, a 4.3 gain; and language from 51.1 to 59.1, an 8.0 gain. **Chart 3** tracks the fifth grade class of 1995-96, showing fourth grade students of 1994-95 to fifth grade of 1995-96. For this two-year period, students increased 3 R's Total NCE by 7.7 points, from 46.8 to 54.5. Reading increased from 46.6 to 51.1, a 4.5 gain; mathematics from 50.2 to 55.8, a 5.6 gain; and language from 47.3 to 56.7, a 9.4 gain.

In addition to showing increases, Cannons Elementary students compete well with other schools in the nation. By the time students leave Cannons as fifth graders, their academic achievement as measured by the MAT7 3 R's Total is significantly higher than the national mean of 50. The 1998 class scored 56.2, the 1997 class scored 57.4 and the 1996 class scored 54.5. For language, all three fifth grade classes scored above the national mean (58.1, 59.1, 56.7 respectively), for mathematics all three classes scored above the national mean (61.2, 61.5, 55.8), and for reading, two of three classes scored above the national mean (48.2, 51.7, 51.1).

Compared to cohort schools with similar student demographics, Cannons' students perform above expectations. **Chart 4** shows how Cannons' second, third, fourth and fifth grades compare for 1997-98. The comparison group is based upon mean-matched data for free/reduced and minority percentages. **Charts 5 and 6** display an analysis by subgroups for ethnic and socioeconomic groups that comprise 15%

or more of the student body. Demographic data is available for grades four and five for the 1995-96 through 1997-98 school years. Results are reported as Percent Per Quartile. Quartile data is not available for years prior to 1995-96. Demographic data is not available for grades two and three for any of the past five years. For the period 1995-96 through 1997-98, free/reduced and minority subgroups have increased as a percentage of the Cannons' school population. The percent of students who qualify for free/reduced lunch has increased from 38 to 52 at grade four, and from 35 to 57 for grade five. The percent of black students has increased from 22 to 37 for grade four and from 25 to 36 for grade five. Students in these subgroups are transient. The majority of students who move in and out of Cannons (school mobility rate of 49% for 1997-98) have been from these subgroups. These subgroups have had more students in quartiles 1 and 2 than subgroups for no free/reduced and for white. Cannons is focusing resources to reduce these gaps (C3). Through these efforts, gains have been made in the highest two quartiles for both free/reduced and black subgroups. From 1995-96 to 1996-97, the grade four percent above the 50th national percentile (quartiles 3 and 4) has risen from 25 to 30% for free/reduced and from 11 to 35% for black. For grade five, the percent has risen from 30 to 38 for free/reduced and 17 to 21 for black.

H5. What nonstandardized (criterion-referenced) or alternative assessments of student performance do you use? What are the results for the last five years?

1. **CSAB:** The Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery is the test that South Carolina uses to measure a student's readiness to begin formal instruction in the first grade. The test is individually administered and includes items related to verbal processing, visual-motor processing, memory and knowledge. The student who obtains a score of 88 out of 117 has met standard. **The vast majority of Cannons' first graders meet the standard.** For the past five years, the percent meeting standard ranges from 77 to 94 with a median of 88 (**Chart 7**). During this same five-year period, the state average ranges from 72 to 76 with a median of 72. The median percent meeting standard for Cannons Elementary is 16 points above the state median. Typically, first grade readiness is directly correlated with family income level. Even though Cannons' grade one Free/Reduced Lunch Rate is the same or greater than the state's rate, Cannons' percent ready scores are significantly higher. The primary reason is attributed to the strong early intervention programs.

2. **CRT:** The District 3 Criterion Referenced Test (A3, H2) is a valuable resource for teachers. Teachers receive an individual report that shows which students have mastered specific grade level standards in language arts and mathematics. The intent of this instrument is to address individual student needs. Therefore, no group data is available.

3. **Art Portfolios:** Every child in grades K-5 prepares an art portfolio containing self-selected examples of exemplary work.

4. **Student Portfolios:** Samples of a student's current work is available any day of the week. All students create portfolios which show student growth and progress in all areas of academics, including science, art, math, and writing.

H6. What was your school's record for the past five years in the following areas that may serve as quantitative indicators of school climate and engagement?

Daily Student Attendance	Year	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98
	Percentage	97.5	96.6	96.5	97.2	96.5

(For five-year period, absences equal to average of 0.63 days per student per month)

Student Dropout Rate No student dropouts for any year.

Daily Teacher Attendance	Year	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98
	Percentage	96.1	97.0	96.5	97.4	96.5

(For five-year period, absences equal to average of .66 days per teacher per month)

Teacher Turnover Rate	Year	93/94	94/95	95/96	96/97	97/98
	Percentage	0	0	0	0	.5

PTO Membership Rate

100% Plus for the past 5 years

The family at Cannons' is one cohesive unit. Attendance is excellent for both students and teachers. During the past five years, only one teacher has left Cannons. This person was a half time teacher and left due to her husband's out-of-state job transfer. Another indicator of positive school climate is the active involvement of parents and community members in PTO.

H7. Which awards received by your school, staff, or students are most indicative of school success?

Cannons has received many awards throughout the last five years. The specific awards that follow were chosen because they are representative of our efforts to educate the "whole" child. Cannons was honored with the *Exemplary Writing Award* given by the SC Department of Education after an extensive application process. The award was received in 1996-1997 and 1997-1998. Our belief is that students "read to write" and "write to read." Writing is incorporated into all areas of the curriculum. Successes of our writing program include an essay, written by a student who won *Lt. Governor's Writing Contest* in the 1995-1996 school year. Additionally, a grandparent volunteer was the recipient of the *SC Department of Education Volunteer Award* (1998) due to her hours of dedication and efforts in our student writing and publishing center.

The arts have been an integral part of the total program at our school, as evidenced by the *Arts Partnership Award* and grant that we received for four consecutive years (1995-1996, 1996-1997, 1997-1998, and 1998-1999). Three students have received special awards including a \$1000 cash award for a collage entry in the *Sidewalk Art Show* at the 1994-1995 *Spring Fling* in Spartanburg, SC; a *Duck Stamp Contest* entry in 1995-1996, and a county award in 1998-1999 *Fire Safety Poster Contest*. In other curriculum areas such as geography, our students participate in the *Spartanburg School District 3 Geography Bowl*. Cannons Elementary students were the district winners for two consecutive years beginning in 1995-1996. In science, two students have been *Regional Science Fair* winners at the University of South Carolina. As evidence of our goal to ensure healthy life styles, our school was the recipient of the *1996-1997 Healthy School Award* in the area of social and emotional health. A team of teachers won a state competitive teacher grant for the 1998-1999 school year entitled *Pre-recorded Books Jamboree (PBJ)*. This grant gives a focus on reading and learning styles, which is another area of emphasis in our curriculum. Our school has been a *School Incentive Award Winner* for the past four consecutive years. With our efforts of restructuring and the *Twelve Schools Project's* grants and awards, we have been able to better meet the ever-changing needs of our diversified student population. In June 1998, we were awarded a very competitive federal grant entitled *The Three Faces of Need*. This grant allows us to offer an after-school program, a Saturday program, and a summer program to all students. It demonstrates our desire to assist and meet the needs of our children. We CARE, because Children Are Really Everything to us!

Part VI – Special Emphasis Areas

J1. Arts Education

The arts play an essential role in our school-wide curriculum goal. Having **Arts in the Hearts** of everyone is a driving force in our school and the Cannons' community. Our arts program is a tool for reaching and involving people in every aspect of education. Appealing to the multiple senses heightens awareness, interest, and learning. Our community has a longstanding reputation for its music. Bringing together Cannons' own Sparkletones, a musical group famous in the 1950's, and having them perform again for their community filled our **theatre** to capacity twice. It is our plan to honor the requests of the community and have them again this year. Students and friends of all ages enjoy musical and theatrical programs at least once each month. Students are offered incentives to encourage the general population to join them in educational programs through the arts. In **Together We Sing** several area churches come to our show and participate in singing with our students and artists. We strive to think in out-of-the-ordinary ways to reach and educate our students and community. The arts provide a vehicle for accomplishing this goal.

Our instruction and enrichment include visual arts, music, theatre, dance, and creative writing. It is balanced between creation, production and performance in the arts. Our professional staff and visiting artists offer history, theory and criticism in the arts. These practices are integrated into all academic disciplines. For example, students are presently using the *Internet* for research to add to our scientific findings about South Carolina. They will paint life-like plants and animals to incorporate into the mural in the science room. The arts are interwoven throughout Cannons Elementary.

Visual art is definitely in the heart of the school. When one enters the front door s/he steps into **Cannons Art Gallery**, a professional art gallery that displays a new show each month. Artists are willing to share their work and time in the name of education. Cannons offers hands-on workshops, gallery talks, and receptions for everyone to meet the artists. Students benefit from planned contacts with the artists. Living with different styles of art on a daily basis is a broadening experience for all that enter our doors. The art teacher takes classes to the gallery to discuss, think about, and study the works of art and the artist's way of expression. Afterwards, the students are challenged to create work reflecting the artist's style. Our school is filled with its members' personal expressions of art. A treasured conversation piece is a bronzed plaque entitled, *Our Cannons Family*, which draws the attention of all who enter the office. It is the result of a cooperative effort of all students, faculty, and staff under the direction of a visiting artist. This masterpiece bears a figure to represent each member of the school family during the 1995-1996 school year. In addition to the school and the district's administration building, students show their work at the Spartanburg Arts Center, area nursing homes, local businesses, and city art shows. Two Cannons' students are recent recipients of one-thousand-dollar prizes for their creative artwork. Classroom teachers take opportunities to have students interact with the artists and to write about their experiences. These writings are posted on bulletin boards for all to enjoy. **The 1998-1999 anthology of student writing, *Arts at Cannons*, is currently underway.** This requires reflection, as students become regular critics of the arts with their varied experiences.

Cannons enjoys receiving a **Target 2000 grant**, which brings **theatre** and dance into the school and community. Motoko, a famous Japanese storyteller, was contracted to share her stories during our **Spring Arts Festival**. We wanted to bring attention to the influence of our Japanese intern and her program. Last year we had Sachio Ito, a dancer from New York, to perform at the **Nippon Matsuri**. Our Japanese teachers use the **Cannons Press Club (CPC) News (C1)** to bring us arts and culture of Japan. They work with students on a regular basis to teach appreciation for culture and language.

A **creative movement instructor** who is in her fourth year of working with students in kindergarten, first, second, and third grades, has been rehired as the result of an arts grant. Her students enjoy basic dance lessons throughout the year and perform for our school several times. They also communicate with other schools' dance students through a pen pal program. They also write in their dance journals. In November of each year, the **Southeastern Theatrical Company** collaborates with our music and dance teachers to engage the Cannons' students in presenting professional performances for the community. The actors and actresses, with our **music, drama, and dance students**, perform Broadway productions

such as "Babes in Toyland," "Scrooge," and "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" to standing-room-only audiences.

Teachers at Cannons seek grants that promote and upgrade the arts. Joanne Boravika, an artist in residence, conducted teacher workshops and modeled teaching through drama for our fourth and fifth grade classes. Her premise was that any instruction that emotionally and dramatically involved students would crystallize learning. For instance, a play based on a social studies or science experiment, where a student might put himself in the happening, gives concrete meaning. We also host entertain several artists in residence at Cannons each year. This year, the **Arts Commission Architect truck** arrives in October for two weeks. Our **drama coach** has worked with a professional **theatre** person, who directs several plays that are performed by our **Drama Club** each year. Michael Bashaw has worked with classes throughout the school to achieve a magical, whole-school percussion production for the community. Students begin to think and discover how goals can be accomplished through cooperation and participation in the arts. With many rewarding opportunities to participate in the arts, students who may not have been successful with auditory learning have an opportunity to excel.

Creative writing is included on our arts' agenda, as authors and illustrators bring their books and talents to share with us. We featured John Lasne as an author and storyteller when we displayed original illustrations of his book, *The Red Ribbon*, in our art gallery. Children wrote stories and illustrated them with his inspiration. **The United States Postal Service** sponsored this artist's educational program, which promotes drug prevention awareness. **The Hub City Writers**, a group of prominent writers in Spartanburg, have brought their books and authors to our school to present writing workshops for each class. Students have been inspired to write anthologies such as *Take Time in Life*, as a result of this project. **The Shepherd Center, a senior citizen group**, was also helpful in publishing this work as part of a **Service Learning grant**. Select community members are invited to become members of our **Hall of Fame**, and they write messages to the students and talk to classes about what makes a successful life. Students write their stories to be displayed in the *hall* and in a publication. *Arts at Cannons* is another project of writing.

The Arts Partnership of Greater Spartanburg encourages and provides grants to expand arts education into our community. We have been able, through these grants, to produce a student/community musical or opera each year. The first year in our new school, our music teacher and her students wrote and performed an original opera entitled, "The Doors are the Wrong Color"; a comedy based on experiences encountered when moving into our new facility. Since that time we have been able to hire professional directors and musicians to assist in these productions.

The Arts Partnership and other grants help us keep quality arts coming to our community and are measures of being successful year after year. The mode of operation for Cannons comes from the teachers and staff, because the arts are an important part of their lives, too. This is proven as they also perform in our musicals and other programs. The students' writings reflect enthusiasm for the arts. Cannons has developed a reputation in the greater community for having an outstanding fine arts program. People have volunteered to offer their arts programs. For instance, a high school, from another school district requested an opportunity to perform for our school. An additional blessing we experienced last year was a Russian opera singer. We definitely have the **Arts in our Hearts**, and it does not go unnoticed.

Our **business partner, Hoechst Celanese**, funded the performance of the opera, *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, as their support of our arts program. Students, parents, community members, and employees of Hoechst Celanese enjoyed this professional production. Sponsorships such as these stir in our *hearts* the love for all forms of the arts.

Using the multiple senses through the arts seems to make lasting impressions on the young and the old. As the arts are paired with our academic curriculum and shared in the hearts of the community, we anticipate a lasting impact on the lives of our children.

We develop comprehensive arts calendars for each year. The arts events are announced throughout Spartanburg by way of the local newspapers, radio broadcasting networks, the Cannons arts website, letters, signs, and word of mouth. We have many partnerships that assist us in bringing these arts

opportunities to Cannons. Our school is unique. The **arts** have become the **heart** of a curriculum that **beats** through the **arts**. Is this the ***Cannon Ball Express***? (The *Cannon Ball Express* has been used over time when referring to Cannons Elementary School and her unique style.)

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Section H4 Chart 1

Test: Metropolitan Achievement Tests
 Edition/Publication Year/Publisher: Seventh Edition/1992/Psychological Corp.
 Scores reported as: Normal Curve Equivalents

C. Chart of Longitudinal Data for the Fifth Grade Class of 1997-98

Year	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Grade	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Testing Month	March	April	April	April
Number Tested	39	41	38	45
Eligible Percent Tested	100	100	100	100
Number Excluded by IEP	3	2	11	7
National Mean	50	50	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21.06	21.06	21.06	21.06
1/3 Standard Deviation	7.02	7.02	7.02	7.02
Standard (Mean + 1/3 Standard Deviation)	57.02	57.02	57.02	57.02

NCE Gain/Loss
1994-95 to 1997-98

Reading Subtest Score	41.2	44.9	49.3	48.2	+ 7.0
Mathematics Subtest Score	58.5	55.9	60.3	61.2	+ 2.7
Language Subtest Score	45.6	45.7	53.3	58.1	+12.5
Total Score 3 R's	45.8	48.5	54.0	56.2	+10.4

E.

F. What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed?

Special education students were assessed by individually administered, functional level instruments (such as the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery, Revised) if their Individual Educational Plan justified the inappropriateness of the group administered grade level test of MAT7. Cannons Elementary serves as Spartanburg School District Three's central site for self-contained special education students.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Section H4 Chart 2

Test: Metropolitan Achievement Tests
 Edition/Publication Year/Publisher: Seventh Edition/1992 Psychological Corp.
 Scores reported as: Normal Curve Equivalents

G. Chart of Longitudinal Data for the Fifth Grade Class of 1996-97

Year	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
Grade	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Testing Month	March	April	April
Number Tested	53	42	45
Eligible Percent Tested	100	100	100
Number Excluded by IEP	1	9	7
National Mean	50	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21.06	21.06	21.06
1/3 Standard Deviation	7.02	7.02	7.02
Standard (Mean + 1/3 Standard Deviation)	57.02	57.02	57.02

NCE Gain/Loss
1994-95 to 1996-97

Reading Subtest Score	48.9	49.7	51.7	+ 2.8
Mathematics Subtest Score	57.2	58.9	61.5	+ 4.3
Language Subtest Score	51.1	51.4	59.1	+ 8.0
Total Score 3 R's	52.0	52.9	57.4	+ 5.4

H.

I. What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed?

Special education students were assessed by individually administered, functional level instruments (such as the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery, Revised) if their Individual Educational Plan justified the inappropriateness of the group administered grade level test of MAT7. Cannons Elementary serves as Spartanburg School District Three's central site for self-contained special education students.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Section H4 Chart 3

Test: Metropolitan Achievement Tests
 Edition/Publication Year/Publisher: Seventh Edition/1992 Psychological Corp.
 Scores reported as: Normal Curve Equivalents

J. Chart of Longitudinal Data for the Fifth Grade Class of 1995-96

Year	1994-95	1995-96
Grade	Grade 4	Grade 5
Testing Month	March	April
Number Tested	48	50
Eligible Percent Tested	100	100
Number Excluded by IEP	0	2
National Mean	50	50
National Standard Deviation	21.06	21.06
1/3 Standard Deviation	7.02	7.02
Standard (Mean + 1/3 Standard Deviation)	57.02	57.02

NCE Gain/Loss
1994-95 to 1995-96

Reading Subtest Score	46.6	51.1	+ 4.5
Mathematics Subtest Score	50.2	55.8	+ 5.6
Language Subtest Score	47.3	56.7	+ 9.4
Total Score 3 R's	46.8	54.5	+ 7.7

K. What groups were excluded from testing, why, and how were they assessed?

Special education students were assessed by individually administered, functional level instruments (such as the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery, Revised) if their Individual Educational Plan justified the inappropriateness of the group administered grade level

test of MAT7. Cannons Elementary serves as Spartanburg School District Three's central site for self-contained special education students.

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Section H4 Chart 4

Test: Metropolitan Achievement Tests

Edition/Publication Year/Publisher: Seventh Edition/1992 Psychological Corporation

Scores reported as: Normal Curve Equivalents

L. Mean Matched Data Comparison of Cannons Elementary to Cohort
M. Based upon Free/Reduced and Minority Percentages
N. 3 R's Total (Reading, Mathematics, Language)
O. 1997-98

Grade	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
Testing Month	April	April	April	April
Number Tested	45	43	65	45
Eligible Percent Tested	100	100	100	100
Number Excluded by IEP	11	9	10	7
Cohort National Mean	43.0	43.0	43.0	43.0
National Standard Deviation	7.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
1/3 Standard Deviation	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Standard (Mean + 1/3 Standard Deviation)	45.3	45.3	45.3	45.3
3 R's Total	44.8	50.9*	49.8	56.2

* MAT7 Short Form Total

SUBGROUP RESULTS

Section H4 Chart 5

Grade Four

Edition/Publication Year/Publisher:

Scores Reported as:

Test: Metropolitan Achievement Tests

Seventh Edition/1992 Psychological Corporation

Percent Per Quartile

(NCE's and Standard Scores are not available by subgroup.)

Chart of Grade 4 Subgroup Data for 3 R's Total (Reading, Mathematics, Language)

	Year	Free/ Reduced Lunch	No Free/ Reduced Lunch	Black	White
Number Tested	95/96	16	26	9	32
	96/97	18	18	11	24
	97/98	33	30	23	39
Eligible Percent Tested	95/96	100	100	100	100
	96/97	100	100	100	100
	97/98	100	100	100	100
Percent of Class	95/96	38	62	22	78
	96/97	50	50	31	69
	97/98	52	48	37	63
Percent in Quartile 1 (1-25)	95/96	25	12	22	16
	96/97	39	0	45	8
	97/98	42	3	48	8
Percent in Quartile 2 (26-50)	95/96	50	19	67	19
	96/97	33	28	45	25
	97/98	27	20	17	28
Percent in Quartile 3 (51-75)	95/96	19	38	11	38
	96/97	6	22	0	17
	97/98	24	37	26	33
Percent in Quartile 4 (76-99)	95/96	6	31	0	28
	96/97	22	50	9	50
	97/98	6	40	9	31
Percent above 50 th National Percentile (Q3+Q4)	95/96	25	69	11	66
	96/97	28	72	9	67
	97/98	30	77	35	64

SUBGROUP RESULTS

Section H4 Chart 6

Grade Five

Edition/Publication Year/Publisher:

Scores Reported as:

Test: Metropolitan Achievement Tests

Seventh Edition/1992 Psychological Corporation

Percent Per Quartile

(NCE's and Standard Scores are not available by subgroup.)

Chart of Grade 5 Subgroup Data for 3 R's Total (Reading, Mathematics, Language)

	Year	Free/ Reduced Lunch	No Free/ Reduced Lunch	Black	White
Number Tested	95/96	17	32	12	36
	96/97	16	27	7	34
	97/98	24	18	14	25
Eligible Percent Tested	95/96	100	100	100	100
	96/97	100	100	100	100
	97/98	100	100	100	100
Percent of Class	95/96	35	65	25	75
	96/97	37	63	17	83
	97/98	57	43	36	64
Percent in Quartile 1 (1-25)	95/96	18	16	25	14
	96/97	19	4	13	9
	97/98	33	0	50	4
Percent in Quartile 2 (26-50)	95/96	53	19	58	22
	96/97	50	19	50	24
	97/98	29	22	29	20
Percent in Quartile 3 (51-75)	95/96	18	28	17	28
	96/97	13	37	38	26
	97/98	17	11	7	16
Percent in Quartile 4 (76-99)	95/96	12	38	0	36
	96/97	19	41	0	41
	97/98	21	67	14	60
Percent above 50 th National Percentile (Q3+Q4)	95/96	30	64	17	64
	96/97	32	78	38	67
	97/98	38	78	21	76

STATE ASSESSMENT

Section H5 Chart 7

Grade One

Test: Cognitive Skills Assessment Battery

Publication Year/Publisher:

1981 / Teachers College Press

Scores reported as: **Percent Meeting Standard**

P. Chart of School and State First Grade Readiness

Year	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Testing Month	August 93	August 94	August 95	August 96	August 97
Number Tested	39	51	41	48	57
Eligible Percent Tested	100	100	100	100	100
Number Excluded by IEP	0	0	0	0	0
State Free/Reduced Lunch Percentage for Grade 1	50	52	53	52	53
Cannons Free/Reduced Lunch Percentage for Grade 1	50	53	58	63	56
State Mean	72.2	71.5	71.9	75.8	79.6
Cannons Elem Mean	87.2	94.1	87.8	77.1	89.5
Difference Cannons vs. State	+15.0	+22.6	+15.9	+ 1.3	+ 9.9

R.